







## GLOSSARY

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| A Fitter Future for All         | Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022   |
| "Fit Futures"                   | A cross-departmental taskforce established in 2004 to examine options for preventing the rise in levels of overweight and obesity in children and young people |
| 'grant-aided'                   | This refers to a school in respect of which grants are made under the Education Orders   |
| "Health and Social Care family" | A term used to describe all the statutory organisations working in the sector, including DHSSSPS, the HSCB, the PHA, the Health and Social Care Trusts etc.    |
| 'the standards'                 | The Nutritional Standards for School Lunches and the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools  |
| 'the Departments'               | The Department of Education and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  |
| Safefood                        | A North-South body responsible for the promotion of food safety on the island of Ireland   |
| BSO                             | Health and Social Care Business Services Organisation  |
| CCEA                            | Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment  |
| DE                              | Department of Education  |
| DHSSPS                          | Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  |

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| *ELB | Education and Library Board<br><i>* The Education and Skills Authority (ESA), when it comes into operation, will be responsible for functions performed currently by Education and Library Boards (ELB) as well as those of CCMS, the Staff Commission for ELBs, and the Youth Council.</i> |
| ES   | Extended schools  |
| *ESA | Education and Skills Authority  |
| ETI  | Education and Training Inspectorate   |
| FSA  | Food Standards Agency   |
| FSM  | Free School Meals   |
| GAA  | Gaelic Athletic Association   |
| HPA  | Health Promotion Agency<br><i>(currently Public Health Agency)</i>  |
| HSCB | Health and Social Care Board  |
| IFA  | Irish Football Association  |
| LLW  | Learning for Life and Work  |
| NA   | Nutritional Associate (ETI)   |
| PHA  | Public Health Agency<br><i>(formerly Health Promotion Agency)</i>   |
| SNAG | School Nutritional Action Group   |



# CONTENTS

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|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Foreword By Ministers .....                         | 1-3   |
| Executive Summary .....                             | 5-8   |
| Introduction .....                                  | 9-11  |
| Aims and Objectives .....                           | 11-13 |
| Taking a Whole School Approach .....                | 13-27 |
| Mandatory elements.....                             | 15-24 |
| School Meals .....                                  | 15-18 |
| Other food and drinks provided by a school .....    | 18-22 |
| Developing knowledge and skills .....               | 22-24 |
| Discretionary elements .....                        | 25-27 |
| Packed lunches and breaks .....                     | 25-26 |
| Lunchtime management .....                          | 26    |
| Promotion and advertising of food to children ..... | 26-27 |
| Early Years Settings .....                          | 27    |
| Implementation of Food in Schools Policy .....      | 28-32 |
| Structures .....                                    | 28    |
| Roles and Responsibilities .....                    | 29-31 |
| Funding .....                                       | 31-32 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation .....                     | 32-33 |
| The Way Forward .....                               | 33    |

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| ANNEXES .....   | 35-75 |
| Annex 1: The eatwell plate .....  | 35    |
| Annex 2: Nutritional standards for school lunches .....                   | 36-49 |
| Annex 3: Nutritional standards for other food and drinks in schools ..... | 50-55 |
| Annex 4: Model Food in Schools policy for individual schools .....        | 56-58 |
| Annex 5: Links to resources for schools .....                             | 59-62 |
| Annex 6: Contacts details .....   | 63-70 |
| Annex 7: Food in Schools Forum Terms of Reference .....                   | 71-75 |

## Foreword By Ministers

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A healthy, balanced diet makes an important contribution to children's growth and development, to their educational performance and attainment and to their long-term health and well-being. The relationship between poor health, nutrition and low school achievement is well-documented.

The current Programme for Government commits the Department of Education to raise participation rates and improve performance and educational attainment, particularly for those in our most deprived communities. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has a commitment to invest in programmes to tackle obesity.

From 2005/06 to 2011/12 the percentage of children in Year 8 who are overweight or obese has increased from 27% to 31%. Research demonstrates that children who are obese or overweight are more at risk of being obese as adults and of developing a range of related health problems. It is increasingly important, therefore, that we take action to seek to improve the health and well-being of children and young people here.

With over 166,000 children here eating school meals each day schools clearly play an important role in ensuring that children are provided with nutritious food. This will play a pivotal role in maintaining and improving child health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, we recognise that for some of the most deprived children, who are often those most at risk of leaving school with poor educational outcomes, the meal provided at school may be the only or main meal the child may receive that day.

We are committed to improving school food provision here, however, we recognise that the food supply chain has been under increased scrutiny recently following the finding of horse DNA in certain meat products. The Food Standards Agency has confirmed there is no evidence that horsemeat or horse DNA poses a health risk. Whilst this is an issue relating to public confidence in the food supply chain, it has highlighted how important it is that we remain vigilant about the quality and source of food supplied to children through the school meals service. The Nutritional Standards for School Meals will continue to play a vitally important role in this regard as compliance with the standards means that the vast majority of meals offered to pupils are freshly cooked using fresh, traceable local produce.

The Food in Schools Policy sets out, therefore, how schools can work with key partners to continuously improve the quality of food provided in the school setting.

The Department of Education and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety have worked closely with schools, key partner organisations and agencies over several years to improve the nutritional standard of the food that is provided in schools. Collectively, we have sought to educate, encourage, promote and support children and young people to make healthy food choices.

Action to improve the nutritional content of the food that is provided in the school setting, educating our children and young people on nutrition and healthy eating, and the adoption of a "whole-school" approach to food and nutrition, therefore, is vitally important to both our Departments.

We recognise that our schools play a key role in teaching and influencing children and young people about the importance of a balanced diet, how to make healthy food choices and the impacts of poor diet on health. We are committed to ensuring that our schools continue to provide an environment through which all young people here can learn and take steps to enhance their health and well-being and whilst so doing reach their full potential both in terms of educational and health outcomes. It is vital that our children and young people develop the knowledge and skills to allow them to eat healthily and make healthy choices not just within school but outside as well. The primary and post-primary curriculum now provide opportunities for young people to gain the necessary skills in this regard.

Over the past decade considerable effort has been directed at improving the nutritional value of school lunches. Nutritional standards have been in place since 2007 and are now well embedded in schools demonstrating the significant progress which has been made. Parents and pupils know that school lunches offer healthy choices and provide good value for money.

However it is important that, in line with the "whole-school" approach which underpins the Food in Schools Policy, all food and drinks provided in the school setting meet the nutritional standards – this includes food and drink available in vending machines, tuck shops, breakfast clubs and after school clubs.

School leaders and school caterers must work together, and in consultation with parents, to ensure that consistent messages about healthy eating are being given to children and young people in their schools. Schools must adopt a 'whole school approach' to all food provided.

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



We are pleased that the various elements of the 'whole school approach' to food in schools have been set out in the Food in Schools policy which outlines what is required of schools in this regard and the support available.

Together we can make a real difference to the health and well-being of our children, both now and in the future. Through the effective implementation of the Food in Schools policy we can, collectively, contribute to a supportive learning environment which facilitates enhanced health and educational outcomes for current and future generations.

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John O'Dowd MLA  
Minister for Education

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Edwin Poots MLA  
Minister for Health, Social Services and  
Public Safety



## Executive Summary

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1. It is widely known that a healthy, balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development and for their long-term health and well-being. We know also that there is a well documented relationship between poor health, nutrition and low school achievement. This is particularly important in early years when lifetime habits are formed but also in teenage years as we educate the parents of the future.
2. We know also that the school environment can have a significant influence on the health behaviours of children and young people and, in particular, their food choices. There are currently over 325,000<sup>1</sup> children and young people enrolled at school here. They receive education for up to 6 hours per day, 190 days per year. Schools therefore play an important role in educating children and young people in the importance of a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle, providing healthy and nutritious food choices and giving consistent health messages.
3. The Department of Education (DE) and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) have, therefore been working with schools, key partner organisations and agencies over the last number of years to improve the nutritional standard of the food that is provided in schools and to encourage, promote and support children and young people to make healthy food choices.
4. In 2009, the Departments drafted an overarching Food in Schools Policy advocating a 'whole-school approach' to all food provided in a school, promoting healthy eating among children and young people at school and developing skills and knowledge to encourage and support healthy eating outside of school. The draft policy was subject to a three month public consultation. There was a good response to the consultation with a wide range of stakeholders indicating strong support for the draft policy. The policy has been redrafted to take account of comments and concerns raised during the consultation and the current economic climate. **This document is the redrafted and agreed Food in Schools Policy.**

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<sup>1</sup> 2012 School Census

5. The Departments recognise that, while schools have the leading role in the Food in Schools Policy, this is within the context that:
  - ☑ Parents, and those with parental responsibility, are the primary influencers of, and have ultimate responsibility for, the eating habits of their children.
  - ☑ Children, and particularly young people, have the right to make informed choices in regard to the food they eat.
  - ☑ For many children the food they eat has implications beyond its nutritional content. This may be because of disability, medical conditions or allergies or for religious and cultural reasons.
  - ☑ The Food in Schools policy can only be truly effective within the context of a school that addresses personal development and emotional health and wellbeing and will work best when linked closely to physical education and physical activity in schools.
6. The Food in Schools Policy therefore is an overarching policy advocating a 'whole-school approach' to all food provided and consumed in schools and developing knowledge and skills in relation to healthy eating and lifestyles.
7. This document articulates the Departments' policy in relation to all food in schools, support available, roles, responsibilities and funding. **This policy applies to all grant-aided schools.**

### Food in Schools Policy - High Level Summary

8. The policy has elements that are mandatory for all schools such as the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches and elements which are strongly recommended but which ultimately schools have discretion to decide upon within their local context, in consultation with pupils, parents and others.
9. In addition, the Department of Education is working towards an amendment to existing legislation to ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks at School are mandatory in all grant-aided schools. In the interim it is recommended that all grant-aided schools should seek to adhere to the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks at School in line with the "whole school approach" advocated through this policy.



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

10. The policy states that grant-aided schools must:
- Adopt a whole-school approach to food and nutrition.
  - Comply fully with the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches and the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools<sup>2</sup>.
  - Ensure that pupils have easy access at all times to free, fresh drinking water.
  - Provide for education in the curriculum in relation to nutrition and healthy eating from foundation stage until key stage 4 (i.e. during compulsory education).
  - Provide education in Home Economics to all pupils at key stage 3 (i.e. in post-primary years 8 - 10) and opportunities to explore ways to develop a healthy diet and to develop practical skills in the safe, hygienic, healthy and creative use of food.
11. Schools have the discretion to make their own decisions in matters of:
- Food brought into schools by pupils.
  - Lunchtime management.
  - Advertising and sponsorship etc.

However schools should have regard to guidance issued by the Department. 'School food: the essential guide' contains a series of practical guidance booklets designed to help schools improve pupils' nutrition and implement healthier eating and drinking practices. It is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide)

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<sup>2</sup> Due to a gap in existing legislation Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools are not mandatory at present in the controlled and maintained sectors where food is provided by the school (rather than an Education and Library Board) through tuck shops, vending machines etc. The Department of Education will take forward an amendment to existing legislation to address this gap and ensure that the Nutritional Standards for **Other Food and Drinks in Schools** apply equally to all food provided by grant-aided schools in the school setting.

12. Schools should ensure that effective links are made between teaching on nutrition and health matters and teaching in relation to physical education, and with other opportunities they provide for young people to take part in sports and physical activity. The school curriculum allows for connected learning.
13. Schools are encouraged to avail of support from health and education partners and voluntary organisations that have developed a range of educational programmes on nutrition and healthy eating. A list of resources and useful contact details are contained in Annexes 5 and 6.

### Early Years Settings

14. All registered childminding and day care services for children under age 12 must adhere to the standard on food and drink as set out in the DHSSPS Minimum Care Standards. This standard is based on the guidance set out in the recently updated "Nutrition Matters for the Early Years".

### Supporting Framework

15. The Departments provide a supporting framework to oversee implementation of the policy. This is led by the Food in Schools Forum and supported by a regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator (PHA).
16. DE has the lead responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

## Food in Schools Policy

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1. The purpose of this document is to outline why a Food in Schools policy is needed, the aims and objectives of the policy, and the importance of taking a whole-school approach. It details what all schools must do with regard to food provided in the school and developing knowledge and skills, and what schools can decide for themselves with regard to food brought into school, lunchtime issues, and advertising and promotion of food products in schools. Finally it describes the framework in place to support schools and the roles, responsibilities and funding for the implementation of the policy.
2. Through the implementation of the policy schools will continue to ensure that nutritious, healthy food is provided to children and young people. This is particularly important at a time when the food supply chain has been under increased scrutiny following the finding of horse DNA in certain meat products. The Food Standards Agency has confirmed there is no evidence that horsemeat or horse DNA pose a health risk. Whilst this is an issue relating to public confidence in the food supply chain, it has highlighted how important it is that schools and the school catering service remain vigilant about the quality and source of food supplied to children through the school meals service. The Nutritional Standards for School Meals will continue to play a vitally important role in this regard as compliance with the standards means that the vast majority of meals offered to pupils are freshly cooked using fresh, traceable local produce.

### Introduction - why do we need a policy?

3. It is widely known that a healthy, balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development and for their long-term health and well-being. We know also that there is a well documented relationship between poor health, nutrition and low school achievement. The Department of Education (DE) and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) have, therefore, been working with schools, key partner organisations and agencies over the last few years to improve the nutritional standard of the food that is provided in schools and to encourage, promote and support children and young people to make healthy food choices both during and after school.

4. In 2004, DE began the process of improving food in schools by implementing a pilot project in around 100 schools. The aims of the pilot were to evaluate how the nutritional standards of school meals could be improved and how best to implement this change. As a result, DE announced the roll-out of new Nutritional Standards for School Lunches, with an additional investment of £3 million per year to improve food content, provide support, equipment and training.
5. At the same time, in response to concerns about rising levels of overweight and obesity in children and young people, the Ministerial Group on Public Health established a cross departmental taskforce in 2004 (Fit Futures) to examine options for preventing the rise in levels of overweight and obesity in children and young people and to make recommendations on priorities for action. The taskforce identified six priorities for action, one of which included the recommendation that a food in schools programme should be put in place.
6. The priorities, recommendations and outcomes within 'Fit Futures: focus on food, activity and young people' have been included and taken forward through the 'Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022 – A Fitter Future For All' which was launched in March 2012. This Framework takes a life course approach to tackling the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity throughout the entire population of Northern Ireland and can be accessed at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/framework-preventing-addressing-overweight-obesity-ni-2012-2022.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/framework-preventing-addressing-overweight-obesity-ni-2012-2022.pdf)
7. Any credible plan to tackle the issue of overweight and obesity in children and young people must, therefore, effectively address the issue of food in schools.
8. There are many policies and programmes already in place that contribute to the Food in Schools Policy e.g. nutritional standards for school meals, the personal development strand of the curriculum etc. However, this overarching Food in Schools Policy is needed to ensure that they all work together to provide a consistent message so that what is taught about healthy eating in the classroom is practiced within the school canteen, school vending, tuck-shop etc. and backed up with practical skills.
9. The Food in Schools Policy advocates that schools adopt a whole-school approach to all food and drinks provided in schools, that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and that all children develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices now and in later life.



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

10. The importance of improving nutrition and supporting healthy eating within schools is underlined by the recognition of its role in contributing to the delivery of a number of long-term strategies and plans e.g.:
- ✓ The Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People
  - ✓ Lifetime Opportunities Strategy
  - ✓ Extended Schools Policy
  - ✓ Investing for Health Strategy and its successor, the new Public Health Strategic Framework ('Fit and Well – Changing Lives') currently under development
  - ✓ Oral Health Strategy
  - ✓ Every School A Good School – a policy for school improvement
  - ✓ Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022 : A Fitter Future for All.
11. The Food in Schools Policy is a significant component of a healthy school linking together healthy eating, physical activity, emotional health and wellbeing and personal development.

## Aims and Objectives

12. The principal aim of the Food in Schools Policy, in line with Fit Futures, is to ensure that *"Food in schools is representative of the balance of good health<sup>3</sup> and makes a significant contribution to childhood nutrition and that schools contribute to the development of the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to make healthy food choices."*
13. In addition, Education and Health policies both recognise the importance of early years in relation to physical, emotional, social and cognitive development. This policy

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<sup>3</sup> *'The Balance of Good Health' has now been updated by the Food Standard Agency's 'The eatwell plate'. A copy is attached at Annex 1.*

aims to ensure that *"Early years settings provide adequate opportunities for good nutrition and embed good habits in terms of healthy eating."*

14. The Executive is committed to tackling obesity and announced through the Programme for Government an investment of £7.2 million over the three year period 2012/13 to 2014/15 into A Fitter Future for All. The Food in Schools policy will make a significant contribution to the delivery of this aim by playing its part, among other policies, in reducing levels of overweight and obesity.
15. The policy has a number of objectives:
  - ☑ All grant-aided schools must adopt a whole-school approach to food and nutrition and should aim to have a whole school food policy in place within 12 months of the publication of this policy.
  - ☑ All school meals must be compliant with the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches which have been compulsory since September 2007.
  - ☑ All food and drinks provided in schools must be compliant with the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools which were introduced in April 2008.<sup>4</sup>
  - ☑ All schools must ensure that pupils have easy access at all times to free, fresh, preferably chilled, drinking water.
  - ☑ All schools must provide for education in the curriculum in relation to nutrition and healthy eating from foundation stage until key stage 4, which has been a statutory requirement since September 2010.
  - ☑ All post-primary schools must provide education in Home Economics to pupils at key stage 3, which has been a statutory requirement since September 2010.

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<sup>4</sup> *Due to a gap in existing legislation Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools are not mandatory at present in the controlled and maintained sectors where food is provided by the school (rather than an Education and Library Board) through tuck shops, vending machines etc. The Department of Education will take forward an amendment to existing legislation to address this gap and ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools apply equally to all food provided by grant-aided schools in the school setting. In the interim it is recommended that all grant-aided schools should seek to adhere to the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools in line with the "whole school approach" advocated through this policy.*



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

- ✓ DE must set targets annually in relation to school meals uptake and in particular the uptake of free school meals by those entitled.
  - ✓ DE and DHSSPS must provide a supporting framework to support implementation of the policy.
  - ✓ DE and DHSSPS must monitor the implementation of the policy and review it within five years of its publication.
  - ✓ Schools, supported by health professionals, should work with parents, pupils and others to develop policies which encourage only healthy options (in line with nutritional standards) to be brought to school.
  - ✓ All schools should consider the appropriateness of promotion and advertising of food in schools in line with any guidance that might be issued by the Departments.
  - ✓ All registered childminding and day care services for children under age 12 must adhere to the standard on food and drink as set out in the DHSSPS Minimum Care Standards. This standard is based on the guidance set out in "Nutrition Matters for the Early Years".
16. Some of the objectives contain elements which schools must comply with (mandatory elements); others contain elements where schools can exercise some discretion (discretionary elements). The Department of Education is working to ensure the necessary legislative cover is in place to require schools to comply with certain aspects. More detail on these objectives is set out in the following paragraphs.

### Taking a Whole-School Approach

17. Research has shown that school-based approaches to supporting child health and well-being can be effective, but only if they adopt a whole-school approach. A whole-school approach to food and nutrition involves addressing the full range of issues that impact on childhood nutrition and on the food choices that children make in school, including:
- ✓ School meals (encompassing nutritional standards, choice, balance, access, availability and cost).

- ☑ Other food provided in schools, e.g. through vending machines, tuck-shops, break time snacks and drinks and breakfast clubs.
  - ☑ Food brought into school (packed lunches, snacks).
  - ☑ Access to food outside school at lunch-time.
  - ☑ Quality of the dining experience.
  - ☑ Education on nutrition and healthy eating.
  - ☑ Development of food preparation and cooking skills.
  - ☑ Training and development of staff working in schools.
  - ☑ Parental attitudes and involvement.
  - ☑ Linkage with school development planning.
  - ☑ Advertising and promotion of food in schools.
18. Some of these issues are already subject to DE policy and investment and are mandatory for schools e.g. nutritional standards for school meals and provision of education on nutrition in the curriculum etc. However, in relation to policy on issues such as how best to engage parents, restrictions on food that children can bring into school, length of school lunchtime and rules on children leaving school premises, it is a matter for schools, in consultation with parents, and with the support of education and health partners, to determine how best to support healthy eating in their school, in a manner appropriate to the age group of the pupils.

### Support Available

19. DE and DHSSPS have commissioned the Public Health Agency (formerly the Health Promotion Agency) to produce a series of good practice guidance booklets to assist schools to adopt an effective whole-school approach to food in schools through the appointment a regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator. School food: the essential guide is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide)



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

It includes a booklet on establishing a whole-school policy:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Establishing\\_School\\_Food\\_Policy\\_09\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Establishing_School_Food_Policy_09_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Establishing\\_School\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Establishing_School_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

20. In addition, as detailed in later sections of the policy, schools are able to avail of direct support and guidance from the School Catering Services in the Education and Library Boards (ELB<sup>5</sup>) and from local dietetic and health promotion professionals.

## MANDATORY ELEMENTS

### School Meals - Nutritional Standards for School Lunches

21. It has become evident in recent years that many children are eating a diet which is too high in fat, salt and sugar and too low in fruit, vegetables and fibre. Research has shown that the school meals chosen by children follow a similar pattern to the food that they eat outside school. It was decided, therefore, that standards should be introduced to ensure that school meals reflect guidance on childhood nutrition. These standards were initially set out in the *"Catering for Healthier Lifestyles"* booklet issued by DE in December 2001.
22. However, it was recognised that introducing nutritional standards for food in schools was likely to be challenging, not least because it would result in choice being restricted to more healthy options. In 2004, a pilot project, directed by representatives from DE, DHSSPS, Education and Library Boards, the former Health and Social Services Boards, the former Health Promotion Agency and the Food

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<sup>5</sup> *The Education and Skills Authority (ESA), when it comes into operation, will be responsible for functions performed currently by Education and Library Boards (ELB) as well as those of CCMS, the Staff Commission for ELBs, and the Youth Council.*

Standards Agency (FSA), was established in over 100 schools to examine how best to improve the nutritional standards of school meals. Evaluation of the pilot project, which is available at [www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/5-schools\\_meals/nutritional-standards/nutritional-standards-further-background-page.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/5-schools_meals/nutritional-standards/nutritional-standards-further-background-page.htm), resulted in a number of recommendations on how best to implement nutritional standards in schools. Key recommendations included:

- ☑ adopting a whole-school approach, by applying nutritional standards to other food provided in school and through effective education about nutrition;
- ☑ involving school principals, parents and children in implementing plans to improve food in school; and
- ☑ providing training, guidance and support for catering staff.

23. The evaluation also identified that there were likely to be significant cost implications arising from the introduction of the new standards as more nutritious meals cost more to produce. In 2005, DE provided additional funding to increase the minimum expenditure on the food content of meals, provide equipment for healthier cooking methods, and provide training and support to catering staff.
24. In April 2006, in recognition of the need for robust action over the long-term to improve the nutritional standards of school meals and to contribute to the Fit Futures Implementation Plan for tackling childhood obesity, DE issued a consultation document proposing both food based and nutrient-based standards for school meals. Following consideration of responses to the consultation, the food-based standards came into effect in all schools from September 2007. These are Nutritional Standards for School Lunches and all grant-aided schools must adhere to them. They are attached at Annex 2 for information.
25. The Nutritional Standards for School Lunches acknowledges that some religions and ethnic groups can have different dietary requirements because of specific food rules and observances. School authorities should ensure that school meals and other food in schools can accommodate those beliefs. A resource has been developed by the PHA to raise awareness of these requirements among catering staff. It is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/guidance-food-religious-faiths](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/guidance-food-religious-faiths).



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

26. The Nutritional Standards for School Lunches also raise awareness and allow flexibility where a child has a special dietary requirement as a result of a disability, medical condition or allergy. The ELBs' Catering Service uses the guide 'Safe Catering' developed by the FSA. The provision of ongoing training and awareness for all staff is important. The level of training provided is commensurate with the grade of staff and relates to special diets, allergies and catering for multi-cultural needs.
27. Therefore, it is important that schools take into account religious and cultural requirements, allergies and special dietary requirements when devising their whole-school approach and that the views of pupils and parents affected are taken into consideration.

### Free School Meals

28. It is of particular importance that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are encouraged and enabled to eat healthy, nutritious food in school as research shows that these children tend to eat more foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar and less fruit and vegetables than children from more affluent families.
29. DE has provided free school meals to children in non working families for many years. DE currently invests around £40 million per year in providing free school meals.
30. From the start of the 2010/11 school year the eligibility criteria for free school meals was extended to include full-time nursery and primary school children whose parents are in receipt of Working Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income which does not exceed £16,190 (in 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13). The new criterion has been introduced on a phased basis with nursery, Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils eligible from September 2010 and Key Stage 2 pupils eligible from September 2011.
31. However, once eligible for free school meals some children, for a variety of reasons, do not take the free meal they are entitled to. Figures from the 2011 School Census and School Meals Census indicated that some 21% of pupils did not take up their entitlement.
32. It is, therefore, vital that both the school catering service and schools take steps to ensure that children who are entitled to free school meals avail of this entitlement and that anyone who may be eligible is encouraged to apply through their ELB.

33. Work carried out in other regions has shown that action to reduce any stigma associated with free school meal entitlement, for example through the use of smart cards, can help to increase uptake rates.
34. DE continues to monitor and set targets in relation to free school meals. ELBs will continue to be required to report on an annual basis to DE on the rate of uptake of school meals by those with free school meal entitlement and efforts being made to increase uptake.

### Support Available

35. 'Nutritional standards for school lunches: A guide for implementation' gives guidance to schools and caterers on how to implement the standards and has been issued to all schools. It provides practical guidance on all the food groups as well as a section on catering for special circumstances e.g. special schools, allergies and religious/cultural beliefs, and healthier cooking practice. It is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation)

36. Schools and school caterers have the support of the regional food in schools co-ordinator and school catering services in ELBs in implementing the standards. Further information relating to these posts is contained in the Roles and Responsibilities section later in this policy document.
37. In addition, the FSA has been working closely with food manufacturers and suppliers regarding processed foods supplied to schools and have published voluntary standards which the FSA will continue to promote and encourage with food manufacturers and suppliers here. These standards can be found at:

[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/nut-specs/](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/nut-specs/).

### Other food and drinks provided by a school - Nutritional Standards for other food and drinks in school

#### Food sold in schools

38. The evaluation of the pilot project to improve the nutritional standards of school meals identified concerns about the likely effectiveness of improving the nutritional



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

standards of school meals if restrictions were not placed on the availability of other less healthy options, for example from vending machines and tuck-shops. These concerns were also highlighted in Fit Futures which identified the need for Real Choice, i.e the foods available should reflect, and be in proportion to, the advice on what constitutes a healthy, balanced diet.

39. In the consultation document that issued in April 2006 DE proposed a set of standards for food and drinks provided in schools through vending machines, tuck shops and at break times, breakfast clubs and after school. Following consideration of responses to the consultation document these standards have now been finalised. They are Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools. The Department of Education is working towards an amendment to existing legislation to ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools are mandatory in all grant aided schools. In the interim it is recommended that all grant-aided schools should seek to adhere to the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools in line with the "whole school approach" advocated through this policy. They are included at Annex 3 for information.
40. The standards are sufficiently flexible to allow for special one-off functions such as discos, parties or fundraising events like school fairs, however it is not expected that sweets etc should be used as rewards. Schools are encouraged to make this clear in their whole school food policies.

### [Support available](#)

41. 'Nutritional standards for other food and drinks in school: A guide for implementation' gives guidance to schools and caterers on how to implement the standards and has been issued to all schools. It provides practical guidance to schools and caterers on how to implement the standards for other food and drinks. It is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation)

42. In addition 'School food: the essential guide' has a section on healthier breaks including running a healthier tuck shop and a section on healthier vending. It recognises that both of these can generate income for schools and that they can continue to do so while adhering to the standards if progressed as part of a whole

school food policy. The Healthier breaks and Healthier vending booklets are available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20breaks%2009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20breaks%2009_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Healthier\\_breaks\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Healthier_breaks_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20Vending%2009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20Vending%2009_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Healthier\\_Vending\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Healthier_Vending_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

### Breakfast Clubs

43. Eating a healthy breakfast is important for a healthy balanced diet. Breakfast Clubs help to prepare children for learning by improving levels of concentration and can make a positive contribution to wider school objectives on issues such as attendance and punctuality. In recognition of this contribution Health and Education agencies have funded and supported a number of Breakfast Clubs at schools. The Extended Schools (ES) programme, targeted at improving the quality of life for children and young people from disadvantaged areas, has the potential to make a significant contribution to the Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People. One of the high level outcome areas of that Strategy is 'Being Healthy' and the ES programme has provided additional resources for schools to respond to the particular needs and aspirations of its community. This includes a varied menu of activities such as homework clubs, study support and has also seen the development of Breakfast Clubs. In the 2011/12 year almost 200 Breakfast Clubs were supported via the Extended Schools programme.
44. Breakfast Clubs can make an important contribution to both education and health policies when effectively implemented. 'School food: the essential guide' has a section on Healthier breakfast clubs outlining the benefits and providing a step by step plan and checklist etc. All breakfast clubs should ensure that they adopt the standards set out at Annex 3. The Healthier breakfast clubs booklet is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20Breakfast%20clubs%2009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20Breakfast%20clubs%2009_10.pdf)  
(English)



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Healthier\\_Breakfast\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Healthier_Breakfast_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

## Drinking Water in Schools

45. A key component of the new nutritional standards is that fresh, preferably chilled, drinking water must be freely available every day. The Health and Social Care family has been working with a number of schools to encourage and support them to make water readily available to children during the school day. Encouraging children to drink water by, for example, providing children with water bottles and encouraging their use, or by providing access to chilled water, can not only contribute to improved nutrition but can also help to tackle tooth decay and assist in improving concentration levels.
46. Encouraging and supporting children to drink water when in school should continue to be a feature of healthy breaks initiatives supported by the Health and Social Care family. Such initiatives should be agreed with Education and Health partners and should be aimed at schools with high levels of social need and/or poor oral health.
47. All new schools must meet the relevant requirements<sup>6</sup> in relation to the provision of drinking water in schools and must also meet the design requirements of the School Building Handbooks. Drinking fountains are not considered good health and safety practice, but chilled fresh water dispensers located in appropriate circulation areas are acceptable.
48. Schools are encouraged to review, improve and promote water in school to help achieve the many health and educational benefits. Providing and promoting water can have a positive effect on pupils' concentration throughout the day. 'School food: the essential guide' has a section on Water provision:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Water%20Provision%2009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Water%20Provision%2009_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Water\\_Provision\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Water_Provision_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

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<sup>6</sup> BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Education, Health and Wellbeing Section 16

## Milk in schools

49. The Nutritional Standards for school lunches state that milk for drinking must be available as an option every day.
50. Under the Department of Education's Milk and Meals Arrangements free school milk is provided to all pupils at special schools, to pupils in nursery and primary schools who do not have access to school meals and to individual nursery and primary school pupils where it is deemed necessary in the interests of their health.
51. In addition, milk is available to schools under the **EU School Milk Scheme** which, since August 2008, has made subsidised milk available to nursery, primary, and post-primary pupils. It is administered by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. Schools decide if they wish to participate in the scheme and schools wishing to participate liaise with their local ELB which prepares a composite claim for all the schools in its area.
52. Children under five who are in approved day care for at least two hours per day are eligible for free milk under the **Day Care Food Scheme**. The Scheme is administered by the Day Care Foods Team, Business Services Organisation (BSO), Pinewood Villa, 73 Loughgall Road, Armagh, BT61 7PR on behalf of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

## Developing Knowledge and Skills

### The Curriculum

53. The research and consultation undertaken as part of Fit Futures and the development of A Fitter Future for All clearly indicate the importance of providing a consistent message between learning in the classroom and eating in the dining room. The curriculum ensures that children and young people are afforded adequate opportunities to obtain knowledge and understanding of nutrition and healthy eating and to develop skills in preparing and cooking food.
54. The curriculum makes provision for education in relation to nutrition and healthy eating an integral part of Personal Development from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4. Pupils also have the opportunity to explore how food grows, is produced and transported, and to engage with issues of sustainable development through the area



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

of The World Around Us at primary level and Environment and Society (Geography) at Key Stage 3. CCEA provides teachers with a range of guidance materials and resources to support these key areas. In delivering the curriculum, schools may also wish to avail of the support that is available from health and education partners and from voluntary organisations, which have developed a range of educational programmes on nutrition, often as part of wider health programmes. Schools can seek advice from CCEA or the ELBs to ensure that any materials they may wish to use meet the requirements of the curriculum.

55. In addition, for the first time, the curriculum includes a requirement for all children to undertake Home Economics at Key Stage 3 as a strand of the Learning for Life and Work (LLW) area. The statutory minimum content for Home Economics includes requirements for schools to provide young people with opportunities to explore ways to develop a healthy diet and to develop practical skills in the safe, hygienic, healthy and creative use of foods, to plan, prepare, cook and serve a range of meals.
56. As a result of the standards for food in schools there will be increasing opportunities to make connections between food policies within schools and the curriculum. Schools should also ensure that effective links are made between teaching on nutrition and health and teaching in relation to physical education, and with other opportunities they provide for young people to take part in sports and physical activity. A range of resources produced by CCEA is available on the NI Curriculum website [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk). Some examples of these are included in Annex 5.

### Related programmes to support skills development

57. The Curriculum Sports Programme which was established in 2007/08 aims to develop the physical literacy skills of our youngest pupils, raise pupils' confidence, self-esteem and motivation to learn, and support a healthy lifestyle by encouraging ongoing participation in physical activity. During the 2011/12 school year, 61 coaches from the IFA and GAA delivered this programme in 567 primary schools, reaching over 39,000 pupils. The feedback has been very positive about the benefits to our youngest primary pupils in developing their physical literacy skills in an enjoyable way and providing links to other curricular areas.
58. Other initiatives which schools may be able to access include the Cook it! programme. Cook it! is a programme which teaches about healthy eating and allows participants to enhance their cooking skills. The course covers basic principles of healthy eating,

food hygiene at home and practical cooking. It is suitable for use with a wide variety of groups and, while it was developed as an adult based programme, it can be used by schools. For further information please contact local dietetic organisations, details in Annex 6.

59. Growing clubs give pupils the opportunity to plan, sow, tend and harvest a range of fruits and vegetables at school and can provide a useful teaching and learning experience for pupils. It is planned that an additional booklet which will look at growing and cooking clubs will be added to School food: the essential guide.
60. The Eat Taste and Grow resource for Years 1–7, produced in collaboration with the Public Health Agency, Safefood and CCEA , aims to increase awareness among children of the origins of their food, local produce and the role that a balanced diet and being active plays in a healthy lifestyle. It is an interactive resource that can be used on an interactive whiteboard or computer.  
[www.safefood.eu/Education/Eat,-Taste-and-Grow.aspx](http://www.safefood.eu/Education/Eat,-Taste-and-Grow.aspx).
61. The FSA has introduced a Food Competency Framework for young people aged between 7 and 16. This framework is intended to help schools and community-based organisations provide children and young people with the foundation to make healthy food choices now and into adulthood. Within the themes of diet and health, consumer awareness, cooking (food preparation and handling) and food safety, the framework applies to young people aged between 5 and 16+, and also encompasses wider food issues.  
[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/food-route-ni/](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/food-route-ni/)

## DISCRETIONARY ELEMENTS

### Packed lunches and breaks

62. Many children and young people do not buy their food in school but instead bring packed lunches or snacks with them to school. These do not have to adhere to the nutritional standards. However, packed lunches provided by the school must comply with the standards.
63. Many primary schools and nurseries, with the support of Healthy Breaks programmes supported by the Health and Social Care family, have introduced policies which encourage children and young people to only bring healthy options with them to school.
64. These policies are to be encouraged and can make an important contribution to good nutrition and improvements in oral health. In particular, they take account of the importance of peer influences in determining children's food choices and so make it more likely that children will choose a healthy option.
65. It is critical, however, where healthy breaks/packed lunches policies are developed that there is effective consultation with parents and pupils in relation to why and how the policies are being introduced, before instituting such policies. School food: the essential guide provides guidance on Healthier breaks:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20breaks%2009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Healthier%20breaks%2009_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Healthier\\_breaks\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Healthier_breaks_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

66. Healthy Breaks programmes have been in place for a number of years but vary on the variety of snacks offered. Fit Futures and A Fitter Future for All, make it clear that, in future, the Health and Social Care family should ensure that programmes which they commission are in line with the new nutritional standards outlined in this document. The PHA is working in partnership with the community dental service and dietitians to develop a regional healthy break scheme which will encourage fruit daily for all children as well as other healthy snacks and drinks.

67. The PHA has developed guidance for parents on how to create a healthy, nutritious and appealing packed lunch. This leaflet 'Are you packing a healthy lunch?' has been made available to all parents of children in primary schools from September 2010 and can be accessed at: [www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish). The FSA has also produced guidance and information on packed lunches and this can be accessed at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/health-and-well-being/eat-well/healthy-eating-for-children.htm](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/health-and-well-being/eat-well/healthy-eating-for-children.htm). NHS Choices Live Well also provides information on healthy packed lunches: [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx).

### Lunchtime Management

68. It is clear that the dining experience will influence a pupil's choice of food. There is no doubt that improving pupils' dining experience can bring many benefits to all including increased uptake of school meals and, in particular, increased uptake of free school meals.
69. There are many strong and differing views on lunchtime management around issues of length of lunchtime, queuing, systems for administering free school meals, allowing pupils off site etc. However, there is no simple solution and no 'one size fits all' therefore decisions around this must be taken at school level in consultation with the whole school community.
70. 'School food: the essential guide' has a section on 'Improving the dining experience in schools' which will assist schools in making these decisions. It is available at: [www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Dining%20Experience%202009\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Dining%20Experience%202009_10.pdf) (English)
- [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Improving\\_Dining\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Improving_Dining_Irish.pdf) (Irish)

### Promotion and Advertising of Food to Children

71. The Office of Communications has introduced standards regulating the advertising and promotion of food on television to children: [www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/foodads\\_new/statement/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/foodads_new/statement/).



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

72. Schools are encouraged to give careful consideration to how foods which are high in fat, salt or sugar are promoted within their school and to introduce policies which reflect the need to restrict the promotion of less healthy options to children. Areas for consideration might include branding on vending machines, sponsorship of events/materials and distribution of promotional items.
73. Schools should have regard to any guidance that might be issued by the Departments.

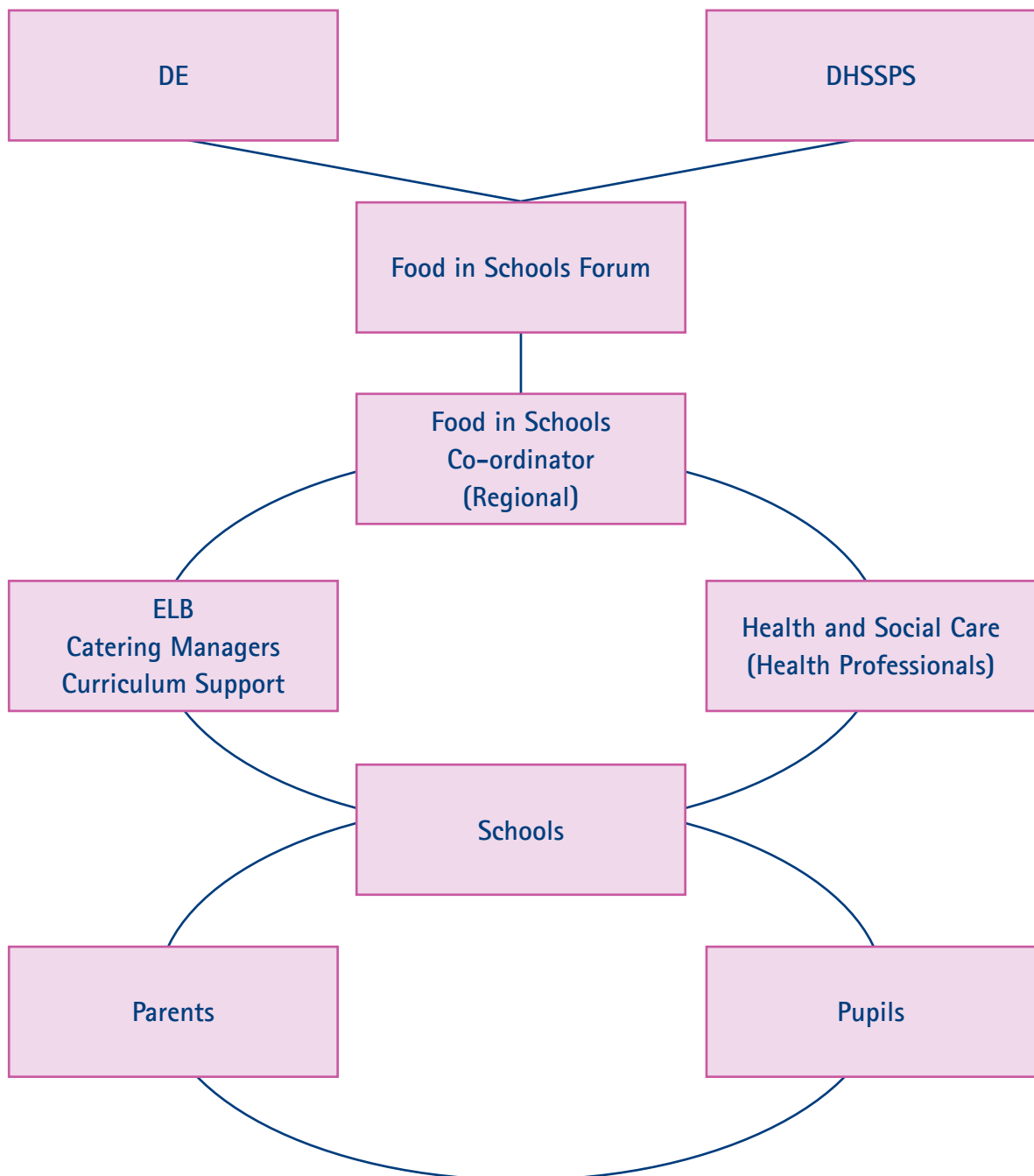
### EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

74. The standards for school meals and for other food and drinks that is provided in schools also apply to statutory nursery provision and the nutritional standards must be implemented in full.
75. However, these standards do not apply to voluntary/community early years provision as there is no statutory basis to do so. The nutritional standards are recommended to these providers and should be applied if they are in receipt of funding from the Department of Education through the Pre-school Education Programme (PSEP) or Sure Start.
76. Sure Start projects and groups offering PSEP funded places are registered and inspected by the Health and Social Care Trusts and as such must comply with the DHSSPS Minimum Care Standards, which include a nutritional standard.
77. All registered childminding and day care services for children under age 12 must adhere to the standard on food and drink as set out in the DHSSPS Minimum Care Standards [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/early\\_years\\_standards\\_-\\_july\\_2012.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/early_years_standards_-_july_2012.pdf). This standard is based on the guidance set out in "Nutrition Matters for the Early Years". This includes Sure Start projects and preschool playgroups.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF FOOD IN SCHOOLS POLICY

### Structures

#### FOOD IN SCHOOLS POLICY SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK





# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Role of the Departments

78. The Departments are responsible for developing the policy. DE will take a lead role in monitoring the implementation of the policy and, in time, for evaluating and reviewing the policy. The Departments have provided and are continuing to provide funding to assist in the implementation of the policy.
79. The Departments have established a Food in Schools Forum, chaired by DE, to provide strategic leadership and guidance on the policy and in particular to ensure support for schools in the implementation of nutritional standards, marketing and promotion of the policy and mapping/ targeting resources. The terms of reference for the Forum (and its three sub-groups) are attached at Annex 7.
80. The Departments have funded a regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator responsible for developing guidance on food in schools and for providing specialist support to ELBs and the Health and Social Care family on the implementation of the Food in Schools Policy.
81. Through funding for Fit Futures and A Fitter Future for All, DHSSPS has enabled the Health and Social Care family to provide a range of activities around food and nutrition to support this policy.

### Role of ELBs

82. The School Catering Services in ELBs are responsible for training of catering staff providing practical support to both catering staff and schools in implementing the Food in Schools Policy. In addition, they have a role in monitoring compliance with the standards and reporting back to the Department via the Nutritional Standards subgroup of the Food in Schools Forum.
83. All catering supervisors have received accredited nutrition training as part of the delivery of the nutritional standards programme. In addition, all catering staff undertakes VRQ Level 1 – Providing a Healthier School Meals Service which includes an introduction to nutrition and ways to promote school food. Awareness training can also be provided for school support staff.

84. The School Catering Services work closely with colleagues in the Health and Social Care family who also provide support to schools on food and nutrition issues.

### Role of Schools

85. At the school level, School Development Plans Regulations require schools to address their strategies for promoting the health and well-being of staff and pupils as part of the school development planning process.
86. Schools should, therefore, consider carefully their role in contributing to the effective implementation of the Food in Schools Policy as part of their school development planning process and identification of priorities for their school. A model template for a school based Food in Schools Policy which itemises the areas to be addressed is attached at Annex 4. Advice on developing a whole school food policy is available at:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Establishing\\_School\\_Food\\_Policy\\_09\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Establishing_School_Food_Policy_09_10.pdf)  
(English)

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food\\_in\\_school\\_09/Establishing\\_School\\_Irish.pdf](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/food_in_school_09/Establishing_School_Irish.pdf)  
(Irish)

### Role of Parents

87. If the Food in Schools Policy is to be effective there is a need for parents to be effectively informed and engaged. When the nutritional standards were being introduced parents received a leaflet explaining the plans to improve the nutritional standards of school meals.
88. Parental involvement is essential in developing any of the discretionary elements of the policy and, in particular, in supporting school policies on food brought into schools e.g. packed lunches. The PHA has developed guidance for parents on how to create a healthy, nutritious and appealing packed lunch. This leaflet 'Are you packing a healthy lunch?' has been made available to all parents of children in primary schools from September 2010 and can be accessed at:
- [www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish).



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Role of Pupils

89. Pupils will play a vital role in making this policy a success. They should be actively involved in decision making around all food in school.
90. Whilst the standards are mandatory, pupils should nonetheless be given the opportunity to give their opinion on school lunches (quality, choices, prices and service), healthy tuck shop and vending choices, and how they are educated about healthy eating.
91. Pupils should be given the opportunity to input to rules about the discretionary elements of the policy e.g. packed lunches, length of break and lunch times and whether students can leave the school premises at lunchtime.

## Funding

92. DE currently invests around £40 million per year in providing free school meals to those who are eligible.
93. In addition to this, for a number of years DE has been directly investing over £3 million per year in the implementation of nutritional standards to ensure that all school meals and other food provided in schools are healthy and nutritious. This funding, for the most part, ensures additional investment in high quality ingredients and also supports:
  - investing in new equipment needed to prepare healthier options;
  - developing and implementing a training programme for catering staff; and
  - supporting a communication and marketing plan to promote healthy, nutritious food in schools.
94. Funding is also being provided to support nutrition and health projects through DE's Extended Schools Programme and through nutrition and oral health programmes developed by the Health and Social Care family.
95. The Departments have funded a regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator responsible for developing guidance on food in schools and for providing specialist support to ELBs

and the Health and Social Care family on the implementation of the Food in Schools Policy.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

96. DE is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of this policy and has established systems to ensure that it receives standardised information on a regular basis on key indicators of performance such as school meal uptake, including uptake by children who are entitled to free school meals.
97. PHA initiated a research survey in 2008 which gathered information on attitudes and perceptions of food in schools with a variety of groups including principals, teachers, pupils, parents, governors and catering staff. The research findings are of particular use to the Food in Schools Forum in determining its action plan and marketing and promotion strategy. A link to the report is set out below.  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-top-marks-summary-report-food-schools-research-northern-ireland](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-top-marks-summary-report-food-schools-research-northern-ireland). This research is currently being repeated to evaluate the food in school food programme and set direction for future work.
98. From January 2007 to March 2011 the Education and Training Inspectorate's Nutritional Associates (NAs) obtained evidence from inspections relating to the nature, range and quality of healthy eating policies and practices in schools. Two reports on the progress made in the implementation of the nutritional standards and general approaches to promoting healthy eating in schools have also been published:  
[www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-primary/surveys-evaluations-primary-2007/progress-made-in-the-implementation-of-catering-for-healthier-lifestyles-and-general-approaches-to-promoting-healthy-eating-in-schools-in-northern-ireland-primary.htm](http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-primary/surveys-evaluations-primary-2007/progress-made-in-the-implementation-of-catering-for-healthier-lifestyles-and-general-approaches-to-promoting-healthy-eating-in-schools-in-northern-ireland-primary.htm)  
[www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-primary/surveys-evaluations-primary-2010/evaluation-of-the-progress-made-in-the-implementation-of-the-food-based-nutritional-standards-school-food-top-marks-primary.htm](http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-primary/surveys-evaluations-primary-2010/evaluation-of-the-progress-made-in-the-implementation-of-the-food-based-nutritional-standards-school-food-top-marks-primary.htm)
99. The findings in these Reports have formed the basis for ongoing work on the implementation of the nutritional standards and general approaches to promoting healthy eating in schools.



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

100. The School Catering Services in ELBs report on compliance to the Department through the Nutritional Standards subgroup of the Food in Schools Forum.
101. DE is also carrying out a baseline survey of all grant-aided schools. It is intended that the survey will be repeated at regular intervals (over a number of years) to measure progress in compliance with this whole school approach to food in schools.

### THE WAY FORWARD

102. It is encouraging that ETI's latest published findings on compliance was that a majority of schools have continued to demonstrate that good or very good progress is being made in the implementation of the food based nutritional standards and the general approaches to promoting healthy eating. A minority are making outstanding progress. While most schools are making outstanding, or very good, progress towards achieving aspects of the food-based nutritional standards, there remain a number of important areas in menu planning where these standards are not being met and these are being addressed by the ELBs and other school authorities as required.
103. The Food in Schools Forum is tasked with ensuring support for schools and providing advice on implementation of the Food in Schools Policy, including resources and supporting structures to ensure value for money and maximising use of limited available resources.
104. The Forum is responsible for agreeing a marketing and promotion strategy that will support schools, parents and pupils and encourage uptake of school meals, in particular free school meals.
105. The Food in Schools Policy is about promoting healthy food choices by our children and young people while at school with a view to encouraging healthy lifestyles beyond school. Ultimately it is about achieving better educational outcomes and better health outcomes for the school population of today and for future generations. The Departments believe that this is a worthwhile goal.





## The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



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*\*\*For Information Only –  
these standards were subject to a separate consultation and are currently in place.\*\**

## NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

For further detail please see the Guide for Implementation at the link below

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation)

August 2008



## NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

| Food Group   | Standards  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Group 1:</b><br/>Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods eg noodles and cereals.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Every lunch service must contain a portion or portions of food from this group.</li> <li>○ Rice and pasta must be offered at least once a week. In a single choice menu, rice or pasta must be served at least once a week.</li> <li>○ Bread should be available on a daily basis in all schools.</li> <li>○ Also see additional requirements on fried foods – see Group 5a.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Starchy foods are usually inexpensive and provide energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.</li> <li>○ Offering rice and pasta provides variety and encourages children to try foods they might not get the chance to try at home.</li> <li>○ Bread is a healthy source of carbohydrates.</li> <li>○ Nearly all types of bread are acceptable: white, brown, wholemeal, wheaten, granary, high-fibre white bread and rolls, homemade bread, bagels, pitta bread, chapattis made without fat.</li> <li>○ Bread should be provided without spread, which should be freely available.</li> <li>○ Bread is additional to, and not a replacement for, the main meal accompaniment and it should be positioned at the end of the serverly.</li> </ul> |  |

| Food Group   | Standards  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Group 2:</b></p> <p><b>Fruit and vegetables.</b></p> <p>This group includes fresh, frozen, canned and dried varieties and fruit juices.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not less than <b>two portions</b> of fruit and vegetables should be available per child throughout the lunch service.</li> <li>○ Of this, at least one portion should be vegetables or salad and at least one portion should be fruit (fresh, tinned in juice, fruit salad, fruit juice or dried fruit).</li> <li>○ Pies, crumbles and other composite fruit dishes must contain at least <b>one portion of fruit per serving</b>.</li> <li>○ Pies, casseroles, stews and other composite main course dishes must contain a <b>minimum of half a portion of vegetables per serving</b>, in addition to a separate serving of vegetables or salad.</li> <li>○ In nursery and primary schools a fruit based dessert such as, fruit tinned in natural juice, fruit salads, fruit crumble, fruit fool or fruit pie must be offered at least three times a week.</li> <li>○ Baked beans must not be served as a vegetable more than <b>once a week</b> in a primary school. Baked beans must not be the only vegetable option on any day in a post-primary school.</li> <li>○ If beans or pulses form the protein part of a main course, another vegetable must be available.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fruit and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. It is recommended that we eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Information about portion sizes is included in the following table.</li> <li>○ Spaghetti tinned in tomato sauce does not count as a vegetable.</li> <li>○ Unlike most vegetables, baked beans do not contain vitamin C.</li> <li>○ Serving a separate, non-pulse vegetable with pulse-based vegetarian options provides variety for vegetarians and ensures that a mixture of nutrients is provided.</li> </ul> |  |

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



## What is a portion?

For adults, a portion of fruit or vegetables is 80g, but there are no recommendations for children. Practically we suggest a good guide would be to serve at least half an adult portion, (ie 40g) to nursery pupils, moving towards an adult portion (ie 80g) for primary/post-primary pupils. The table below gives examples of how these portions translate into kitchen servings.

|                                    | Nursery                  | Primary/Post-Primary   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
|                                    | One portion              | One portion            |
| Cooked vegetables                  | 1-2 tablespoons (tbsp)   | 2-3 tablespoons (tbsp) |
| Salad vegetables                   | 1/2 dessert bowl         | 1 dessert bowl         |
| Fresh fruit                        | 1/2 -1 fruit             | 1 fruit                |
| Fruit salad, fruit tinned in juice | 1-2 tablespoons (tbsp)   | 2-3 tablespoons (tbsp) |
| Fruit juice                        | 150ml                    | 150ml                  |
| Dried fruit                        | 1/2 -1 tablespoon (tbsp) | 1-2 tablespoons (tbsp) |

| Food Group  | Standards  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Group 3:</b><br/>Milk and dairy foods.</p> <p>This group includes milk, cheese, yogurt and milk puddings.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Every lunch service must contain a portion or portions of food from this group.</li> <li>○ In addition drinking milk must be available as an option every day.</li> <li>○ Cheese must not be served as the only vegetarian option more than <b>twice a week</b>.</li> <li>○ Cheese may be used as a topping more frequently.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Milk and milk products are excellent sources of several nutrients including calcium, which is important for good bone development, protein and vitamins.</li> <li>○ Milk, plain or flavoured, is a good drink option. Semi-skimmed milk has the same amount of calcium as whole milk and is the preferred choice in primary and post primary schools. Skimmed milk is not appropriate for children under five years.</li> <li>○ Alternatives to cheese provide variety for vegetarians. Recommended alternatives include beans, pulses and lentils.</li> <li>○ Where a portion of cheese is served as the main protein item, it also counts as a portion of food from Group 4.</li> <li>○ Eggs, butter and ice cream are not included within this group. Eggs are included within Group 4, butter is classed as a fat and ice cream is included under Group 5b.</li> </ul> |  |

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



| Food Group  | Standards  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Group 4:</b></p> <p>Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein.</p> <p>This group includes beef, pork, lamb, chicken, fish, eggs, pulses, eg peas, beans, lentils.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Every lunch service must contain a portion or portions of food from this group.</li> <li>○ Meals containing red meat must be served: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ a minimum of twice a week and a maximum of three times a week in nursery and primary schools; and</li> <li>☑ a minimum of three times a week and a maximum of four times a week in post-primary schools.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Fish should be available at least once a week in primary schools and at least twice a week in post-primary schools.</li> <li>○ Oily fish should be available at least once every four weeks.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p><i>'Times a week'</i> refers to a service opportunity ie a breakfast service, break service or lunch service. For example if a post primary school provides a breakfast, break and lunch service then over the school week this provides 15 service opportunities which red meat will be allowed a maximum of four times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red meat includes beef, pork and lamb and meals made from them.</li> <li>○ Sausages are not classed as red meat but as a meat product. Burgers are classed as a meat product unless they contain at least 95% lean mince meat and then will be classed as red meat. Composite dishes made from mince which contain less than 95% lean meat are classed as a meat product. See Group 5a for further information on meat products.</li> <li>○ On days when red meat is being served at lunch, there can be more than one choice as pupils will only choose one option.</li> <li>○ Red meat is a good source of iron.</li> </ul> |  |

- Meat, fish and alternatives such as eggs, beans and pulses are a major source of protein.
- Offering fish provides variety and offers foods that children might not otherwise get a chance to try. This would include sandwich and baguette fillings such as tuna and salmon.
- An Oily fish is one containing omega 3 fatty acids which help maintain a healthy heart. This includes fresh, canned or frozen salmon, sardines, pilchards, mackerel, herring and fresh or frozen tuna.
- Tuna only counts as an oily fish when it is fresh or frozen because the omega 3 fatty acids are removed during the canning process. However, canned tuna can be counted as one of the non-oily portions of fish.
- On the weeks when oily fish is provided this meets the standard for fish for that week in primary schools and will count towards the post primary standard.

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



| Food Group  | Standards  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Group 5a:</b></p> <p><b>Fried and other high fat foods.</b></p> <p>This group includes cooking fats and oils, oily salad dressings, mayonnaise, salad cream, crisps, cream, pastry.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Deep-fried foods or other high fat products, such as chips, roast potatoes, other fried potatoes, garlic bread, or meal choices containing pastry, eg quiche, apple pie, vol-au-vent <b>may be served a maximum of twice a week.</b></li> <li>○ In addition whole muscle or fillet of fish coated in breadcrumbs can be served <b>once a week.</b></li> <li>○ Meat or chicken products (such as burgers, sausages, chicken nuggets etc) may be served a <b>maximum of once a week</b> in primary schools and a <b>maximum of twice a week</b> in post primary schools.</li> <li>○ To allow choice for pupils on the days when meat or chicken products are available, schools should aim for 50% healthy meal options and they should be presented and marketed in a competitive way to other meal options. This standard does not apply to single choice menus.</li> <li>○ There should be <b>at least 2 days each week</b> without any meat or chicken products, fried foods, foods cooked in batter, breadcrumbs or foods containing pastry, for example fish in breadcrumbs, chips, sausages, vol-au-vents, quiche, apple pie etc. This is to encourage children to try a greater range of foods in their diets and explore new taste experiences.</li> <li>○ When a high fat starchy food is served for eg chips or garlic bread an alternative without added fat must be available.</li> <li>○ Lower fat desserts must be available on days when deep-fried foods and other high fat foods are offered.</li> <li>○ The only savoury snacks available should be nuts and seeds with no added salt or sugar. Savoury crackers or breadsticks may be offered provided they are served with fruit or vegetables or a dairy food.</li> </ul> |

## Notes

'Times a week' refers to a food service opportunity ie a breakfast service, break service or lunch service.

For example if a post primary school provides a break and lunch service then over the school week this provides 10 food service opportunities. This means that deep fried or high fat foods can only be served twice and meat or chicken products are also limited to two times over the 10 service opportunities.

- 'Deep-fried or other high fat foods' includes:
  - ☑ any food that is deep-fried, either in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process, even flash fried foods or foods brushed or sprayed with oil, eg roast potatoes, chips, oven chips, potato waffles, potato shapes;
  - ☑ pre-prepared coated, battered and breaded products, eg chicken nuggets, fried fish, fish fingers, battered onion rings and doughnuts.
- Meat and chicken products are bought-in manufactured products that have been processed in some way and are generally ready for cooking/reheating.
- On days when meat or chicken products are being served at lunch, there can be more than one choice as pupils will only choose one option.
- Whole muscle meat or chicken, which is dipped in egg, coated in home-made crumb without the addition of any fat or oil and dry baked will not count as a meat or chicken product.
- Limiting fried and other high fat options helps to limit the overall fat content of lunches.
- Offering non-fried options when fried or high fat options are on the menu helps to ensure that a variety of other starchy foods are provided.
- Limit the fat content of lunches by not offering too many foods from this group which have added fat, eg pastry toppings on pies or battered coating on fish.
- Meat products must:
  - ☑ Meet the legal minimum meat content levels set out in the Meat Products Regulations (NI) 2004 as amended or updated from time to time. Products not specifically covered by these legal minimal requirements must meet the same minimum meat content levels prescribed for burgers;

## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

- Not be "economy burgers" as described in the Meat Products Regulations (NI) 2004;
- Contain none of the prohibited list of offal.
- Offering lower fat desserts on days that deep-fried or high fat foods are on offer limits the fat content of lunches. Lower fat desserts should have 10% or less fat in the complete dish. Examples of lower fat desserts include:
  - fresh, stewed or tinned fruit (in fruit juice) or fruit salad, either on its own or served with low fat yogurt or fromage frais;
  - baked apple with custard;
  - low fat yogurt or fromage frais;
  - milk puddings, eg custard, semolina, rice pudding, tapioca – served with fruit;
  - fruit crumble with custard;
  - fruit sponge made with egg/fatless sponge eg Eves pudding served with custard;
  - fruit crisp (breadcrumb topping) with custard;
  - fruit 'fool' made with custard/ fromage frais/ yogurt;
  - jelly and fruit;
  - ice cream and fruit;
  - jelly, ice cream and fruit;
  - instant dessert served with fruit;
  - bread and butter pudding with custard;
  - fruit flan (egg/fatless sponge) with fresh or tinned fruit and fromage frais;
  - wholemeal/flakemeal biscuit, ½ portion of fruit and semi skimmed milk to drink;
  - muffin and orange juice (except choc-chip muffins).
- NB It is essential that the dessert combinations are as shown here for them to be considered as lower fat options, as it is the OVERALL fat content of the menu item that was used to determine their suitability.
- Be aware of nut allergies. It will be for individual schools to decide on whether or not to provide nuts.
- Remember fresh cream or imitation cream is classed as a high fat food and should not be used in lower fat desserts or as toppings.

| Food Group   | Standards   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Group 5b:</b><br/> <b>Confectionery and Other Sweet Foods:</b><br/>           Sugar, Sweet pastry, Chocolate, Sweets, Sweetened Soft Drinks, Puddings, Cakes, Biscuits, Jam, Jelly, Ice-cream.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products should not be available throughout the lunchtime.</li> <li>○ Cakes and biscuits can only be provided at lunchtime and as part of a meal.</li> <li>○ Cakes, biscuits and puddings made with cocoa powder should only be available a maximum of 2 days per week.</li> <li>○ High fat and or high sugar toppings used for decoration for example cream, butter cream, icing sugar should be kept to a minimum and only used if essential eg to set fruit on top of a sponge. If used, an undecorated or healthier dessert should also be available.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Confectionery includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Chocolate and chocolate products, for example: bars of milk, plain or white chocolate; chocolate flakes, buttons, or chocolate-filled eggs.</li> <li>☑ Chocolate-coated bars.</li> <li>☑ Biscuits containing or coated in chocolate (including those with a chocolate drizzle, partly and fully-coated biscuits such as chocolate digestives, chocolate-covered caramel wafers, chocolate fingers, choc chip cookies).</li> <li>☑ Sweets, for example: boiled, chewy, gum, liquorice, mint and other sweets, also sherbet, fudge, marshmallows, toffee and chewing-gum; this includes sugar-free sweets and chewing-gum.</li> <li>☑ Cereal chewy bars, cereal crunchy bars, cereal cake bars, processed fruit bars.</li> <li>☑ Fresh or dried fruit that has been sugared or covered with a yoghurt or chocolate coating.</li> <li>☑ Choc ices and other chocolate coated ice-cream.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>NB This does not include cocoa powder used in cakes, puddings, biscuits or low calorie drinking chocolate or combination drinks made with yoghurt or dairy equivalents.</p> |   |



## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### Drinks

The only drinks available should be:

- plain water (still or sparkling)
  - milk
  - unsweetened fruit or vegetable juices
  - yoghurt or milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar)
  - drinks made from combinations of the above (eg smoothies)
  - low calorie hot chocolate
  - tea
  - coffee
- } these drinks are not suitable for the nursery sector

Combination drinks must contain at least 50% of the milk, yoghurt or fruit juice as appropriate.

Artificial sweeteners are only permitted in combination drinks.

Low calorie hot chocolate is defined as 20Kcals/100mls.

Drinking water, ie tap water, must be provided free every day.

### Salt and Condiments

Table salt should not be available within nursery or primary schools. It should not be on view in the post-primary school dining room but may be made available on request from the service counter.

Condiments (tomato ketchup, brown sauce, salad cream, relishes etc) should only be provided from the service counter and should be controlled by the kitchen staff.

## SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Meals provided for pupils in special schools should follow the standards listed for primary schools. However, portion sizes should reflect the pupil's age.

It should also be noted that pupils in special schools often require special diets, and that some, e.g. those suffering from autism, often have particular food aversions, or will only eat particular foods. Appropriate adjustments should therefore be made to the meals service. A diet sheet, prepared by a Registered Dietitian, or specific guidance in agreement with the child's doctor, parent and principal should be available for the children concerned.

### NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR OTHER FOOD AND DRINKS IN SCHOOLS<sup>7</sup>

The following standards apply to food sold or served in schools through vending machines, tuck shops, breakfast clubs, after school clubs and at break times and should be read in combination with the food-based lunch standards:

- (i) no confectionery should be sold in schools;
- (ii) no savoury snacks other than nuts\* and seeds (without added salt or sugar) should be sold in schools;
- (iii) a variety of fruit and vegetables should be available in all school food outlets. This could include fresh, dried\*\*, frozen, tinned and juiced products;
- (iv) children and young people must have easy access at all times to free, fresh, preferably chilled, water in schools so that children do not have to depend on going to the lavatory to get water;
- (v) the only other drinks available should be bottled water (still or sparkling), milk, unsweetened fruit or vegetable juices, yoghurt and milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar) or drinks made from combinations of these, eg smoothies, low calorie hot chocolate, tea and coffee. Artificial sweeteners are only permitted in combination drinks. Combination drinks must contain at least 50% of the milk, yoghurt or fruit juice as appropriate. Low calorie hot chocolate is defined as 20 calories per 100 millilitres.

\* Be aware of nut allergies. It will be for individual schools to decide on whether or not to provide nuts.

\*\*Dried fruit has a higher concentration of sugars. Therefore, in terms of dental health, it is not regarded as a suitable snack between meals. It is best taken as part of a meal.

For additional information on these standards please refer to the Nutritional Standards for other food served in schools (Annex 3).

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<sup>7</sup> *The Department of Education is working towards an amendment to existing legislation to ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools are mandatory in all grant aided schools. In the interim it is recommended that all grant-aided schools should seek to adhere to the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools in line with the "whole school approach" advocated through this policy.*

*\*\*For Information Only –  
these standards were subject to a separate consultation and are currently in place.\*\**

## NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR OTHER FOOD AND DRINKS IN SCHOOLS

For further detail please see the Guide for Implementation at the link below<sup>8</sup>:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation)

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<sup>8</sup> *The Department of Education is working towards an amendment to existing legislation to ensure that the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools are mandatory in all grant aided schools. In the interim it is recommended that all grant-aided schools should seek to adhere to the Nutritional Standards for Other Food and Drinks in Schools in line with the "whole school approach" advocated through this policy.*



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Standard 1

### No confectionery should be sold in schools

Confectionery includes:

- Chocolate and chocolate products for example bars of milk, plain or white chocolate, chocolate flakes, buttons or chocolate filled eggs.
- Fresh or dried fruit that has been sugared or coated in yogurt or chocolate.
- Chocolate coated bars.
- Ice cream (except at lunchtime as part of a meal).
- Chocolate ices and other chocolate coated ice cream.
- Chocolate coated or flavoured biscuits.
- Sweets, for example, boiled, chewy, gum, liquorice and mint. Also sherbet, fudge, marshmallows, toffee and chewing gum. This includes sugar free sweets and chewing gum.
- Cereal chewy bars, cereal crunchy bars, cereal cake bars and processed fruit bars.

## Standard 2

### No cakes and biscuits

Cakes and biscuits must not be provided (except at lunchtime and as part of a meal).

Cakes include:

- Manufactured, bought in products and home made tray bakes, cakes, biscuits and buns made in the school kitchen.
- Sponge cakes, maderia cake, swiss roll, fruit cake, banana loaf, apple cake, carrot cake, gateaux and American muffins.
- Pastries for example, croissants, Danish, jam tarts and mince pies.

Biscuits include:

- All types of sweet varieties eg Rich tea, digestive, ginger nuts, flapjacks, shortbread and wafers.

Savoury crackers and breadsticks can be provided but must be served with fruit or vegetables or a dairy food for example cheese.

### Standard 3

**No savoury snacks other than nuts\* and seeds (without added salt or sugar) should be sold.**

**\* be aware of nut allergies. It will be for individual schools to decide on whether or not to provide nuts.**

Savoury snacks include:

- Crisps or 'crisp like' products eg potato, corn and cereal snacks.
- Nuts, seed, fruit or vegetables with added salt, sugar or fat eg salted nuts, honey roasted nuts and fruit coated in sugar, chocolate or yogurt.

### Standard 4

**A variety of fruit and vegetables should be available in all school food outlets. This could include fresh, frozen, tinned, dried\* and juiced products.**

Fruit and vegetables can include:

- All varieties of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Fresh fruit salad.
- Fruit tinned in natural juice.
- Unsweetened fruit juice (100% fruit juice)

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



- Baked beans.
- Salad vegetables.
- Vegetable sticks.

\* Remember dried fruit has a higher concentration of sugars. Therefore in terms of dental health, it is not suitable as a snack between meals. It is best taken as part of a meal, for example breakfast.

## Standard 5

Children and young people must have easy access at all times to free, fresh, preferably chilled water and should not depend on going to the lavatory to get water.

## Standard 6

The only drinks available should be:

- plain water (still or sparkling)
  - milk
  - unsweetened fruit or vegetable juices
  - yoghurt or milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar)
  - drinks made from combinations of the above (eg smoothies)
  - low calorie hot chocolate
  - tea
  - coffee
- } these drinks are not suitable for the nursery sector

Combination drinks must contain at least 50% of the milk, yoghurt or fruit juice as appropriate.

Artificial sweeteners are only permitted in combination drinks.

Low calorie hot chocolate is defined as 20Kcals/100mls.

## Standard 7

This Standard must be applied in three parts

- ☑ Foods high in fat or deep fried foods are restricted across the whole school day and should not be offered in total more than twice a week.
- ☑ Meat or chicken products are restricted across the whole school day and should only be offered a maximum of once a week in primary schools and a maximum of twice a week in post primary schools.
- ☑ There should be at least 2 days each week without any fried foods, foods high in fat and meat or chicken products.

Foods high in fat or deep fried include:

- ☑ Any food that is deep fried either in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process even flash fried foods or foods brushed or sprayed with oil.
- ☑ Chips, roast potatoes, other fried potatoes, oven chips, potato waffles and potato shapes.
- ☑ Garlic bread.
- ☑ Pastry dishes eg quiche, meat pies, fruit pies and vol-au-vents.
- ☑ Fried fish products.

Meat and chicken products include:

- ☑ Burgers.
- ☑ Sausages, sausage meat and sausage products.
- ☑ Any shaped or coated meat product eg chicken nuggets, escalopes and goujons.



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

It is expected that foods covered by this standard will mainly be served at lunch time. However if they are to be served at other times eg breakfast or break time the standard must be applied across the entire school week. For further guidance please see Group 5a Nutritional Standards for School Lunches.

### Standard 8

Food choices or meals containing red meat must be served a minimum of twice a week and a maximum of three times a week in nursery and primary schools and a minimum of three times a week and a maximum of four times a week in post primary schools. This standard applies across the whole school week.

- ☑ Red meat includes beef, pork and lamb and meals made from them.
- ☑ Red meat in sandwiches or paninis is not restricted by this standard. Bacon is classed as a red meat and should only be served as part of a main meal, for example breakfast or lunch. Bacon will be required to comply with the standard for red meat. This is because of its high fat and salt content.

## MODEL FOOD IN SCHOOLS POLICY FOR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS

Use this sample policy, or modify to suit your aims.

School name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of policy implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

This school actively supports healthy eating and drinking throughout the school day.

This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff, governors, education and library board representatives, community dietitian and local school nurses.

### Aim

To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to our school.

### Objectives

Our objectives are to:

- Review the formal curriculum to ensure information relating to food and nutrition in different lesson areas is consistent and up to date.



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

- ☑ Work with the school caterer to trial a healthier breakfast club, serving a range of items.
- ☑ Establish a food week in school to promote healthy eating and drinking messages.
- ☑ Ensure that teachers who are taking responsibility for food in the classroom have basic food hygiene training.

### Action

#### We will meet our objectives by:

- ☑ Discussing at school council. Setting up a sub-group or SNAG to monitor change.
- ☑ Formal curriculum: setting up a working group to audit food based topics across general learning areas.
- ☑ Healthier breakfast club: working with school caterer on a menu of breakfast options at a reasonable cost. Publicising club in school newsletter, plus through poster advertising in the corridors.
- ☑ Food week: running fruit and veg taster sessions. Having a food related competition.
- ☑ Linking with health promoting national events, such as Smile Week for Oral Health, World Cancer Awareness etc.
- ☑ Continuing professional development: sending teacher in charge of food on a one day basic food hygiene course.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

#### We will monitor and evaluate progress through:

- ☑ SNAG: reporting on progress to the school council and reviewing policy annually in light of improvement and changes.

- ☑ Formal curriculum: teachers being able to identify food based topics through schemes of work.
- ☑ Healthier breakfast club: school caterer reporting on the number of pupils using service. Asking pupils, parents and teachers their thoughts about the club and the range of food provided.
- ☑ Food week: head teacher presenting certificates or prizes in school assembly. Displaying photographs at parents' evening.
- ☑ Extra-curricular: producing a club recipe book, reports and photographs posted on the school website.

[www.publichealthagency.org/sites/default/files/Establishing\\_School\\_Food\\_Policy\\_09\\_10.pdf](http://www.publichealthagency.org/sites/default/files/Establishing_School_Food_Policy_09_10.pdf)



## LINKS TO RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

### Nutritional Standards for School Lunches - Evaluation of the Pilot of the “Catering for Healthier Lifestyles Standards”

This report contains an evaluation of the pilot project which ran from March 2004 to March 2005 to test the reaction to the introduction of nutritional standards in 100 schools.

[www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/5-schools\\_meals/nutritional-standards/nutritional-standards-further-background-page.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/5-schools_meals/nutritional-standards/nutritional-standards-further-background-page.htm)

### Nutritional standards for school lunches: A guide for implementation

This publication details the nutritional standards for school lunches which all grant-aided schools must adhere to. As well as explaining why the nutritional standards have been introduced, it offers practical advice on how to implement them.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches-guide-implementation)

### Nutritional standards for other food and drinks in schools: A guide for implementation

This publication details the nutritional standards for other food and drinks in schools which all grant-aided schools should adhere to. It explains why the nutritional standards have been introduced and offers practical advice on how to implement them.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation)

## Nutritional Standards for School Lunches: Poster

This poster displays the nutritional standards for school lunches that all grant-aided schools must adhere to.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-school-lunches)

## School Food: The Essential Guide

This resource contains a series of practical guidance booklets designed to help schools improve pupils' nutrition and implement healthier eating and drinking practices. The booklets provide advice and support for the key areas in which food, drinks and nutrition issues affects schools. Mini case studies support the advice given and, where appropriate, the booklets provide details of recommended further resources.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/school-food-essential-guide)

## Nutrition in Early Years

This document provides guidance for early years providers and childminders on the provision of food for children under 5 years old.

[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/numatters05.htm](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/numatters05.htm)

## Healthy, Nutritious and Appealing Packed Lunches

The PHA has developed guidance for parents on how to create a healthy, nutritious and appealing packed lunch. This leaflet 'Are you packing a healthy lunch?' has been made available to all parents of children in primary schools from September 2010. The FSA has also produced guidance and information on packed lunches. NHS Choices Live Well also provides information on healthy packed lunches.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish)

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/health-and-well-being/eat-well/healthy-eating-for-children.htm](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/health-and-well-being/eat-well/healthy-eating-for-children.htm)

[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx)



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

### Food Standards Agency Nutrient Specifications

Target nutrient specifications developed by the Food Standards Agency for a range of manufactured foods used in school meals.

[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/nut-specs/](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/nut-specs/)

### Food Standards Agency Food Competences for Young People

A food competency framework developed by the Food Standards Agency to help schools and community-based organisations provide children and young people with the foundation to make healthy food choices now and into adulthood.

[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/food-route-ni/](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritionni/niyoungpeople/food-route-ni/)

### OFCOM Standards on the Television Advertising of Food and Drink Products to Children

Standards regulating the advertising and promotion of food on television to children.

[www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/foodads\\_new/statement/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/foodads_new/statement/)

### Children's Food Trust

The Children's Food Trust website contains a number of useful resources aimed at improving the quality of food in schools.

[www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/)

### Eat, Taste and Grow

This resource for Years 1-7, produced in collaboration with the Public Health Agency, Safefood and CCEA, aims to increase awareness among children of the origins of their food, local produce and the role that a balanced diet and being active plays in a healthy lifestyle. It is an interactive resource that can be used on an interactive whiteboard or computer. All primary and special schools received a copy in September 2011 but it is also available from [www.safefood.eu/Education/Eat,-Taste-and-Grow.aspx](http://www.safefood.eu/Education/Eat,-Taste-and-Grow.aspx).

## Curriculum Resources

### Primary Level

#### **Living. Learning. Together**

This resource for Years 1 to 7 aims to provide teachers with support in planning, teaching and assessing PD&MU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) within the Curriculum. It covers many aspects of healthy eating, for example food tasting and textures, importance of a healthy balanced diet, growing your own vegetables; an enterprise approach using CCEA's Story Sack ('Enterprise Story'), food categories, balanced plate, healthy tuck shops/breaks, whole school promotions and making healthy choices and decisions.

#### **STEM Thematic Units: Farming**

This resource for Key Stage 2, produced in collaboration with local farms and companies, includes activities in connection with how food is produced, processed, transported and kept fresh.

### Post-Primary Level

#### **Key Stage 3 Learning for Life and Work Integrated Activity: Food Miles**

This resource forms part of a collaborative unit for KS3 LLW. The purpose of the activity is to introduce pupils to the concept of 'food miles', where the food that we eat comes from, the implications on the environment and economy and the multiple intermediaries involved in bringing it to the north of Ireland.

### Special Education Needs

#### **Thematic Units**

These units for children with severe and moderate learning difficulties have been created by a team of specialist teachers. Each unit contains guidance and a variety of interactive resources and activities to encourage young people to explore issues that will help them meet the challenges of adult independent life, including healthy eating.



## CONTACTS DETAILS

### Statutory Organisations

#### Regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator

The Departments have funded a regional Food in Schools Co ordinator responsible for developing guidance on food in schools and for providing specialist support to ELBs and the Health and Social Care family on the implementation of the Food in Schools Policy.

c/o Belfast Education and Library Board  
40 Academy Street  
BELFAST BT1 2NQ

Tel: 028 90564074  
Email: [Judith.Harvey@belb.co.uk](mailto:Judith.Harvey@belb.co.uk)

#### Public Health Agency

The PHA provides information and resources to support those working in the areas of health promotion and public health, as well as interested members of the public.

Linenhall Street Unit  
12-22 Linenhall Street  
BELFAST BT2

Tel: 028 9032 1313  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

#### Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland

The FSA offers advice on food safety issues and diet and nutrition as well as providing a wide range of resources.

10 A–C Clarendon Road  
BELFAST  
BT1 3BG

Tel: 028 9041 7700  
[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/)  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/eatwell](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/eatwell)

## Safefood

An all-island food safety promotion board established under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, Safefood provides resources on nutrition, and food safety issues looking at lunchboxes, superfoods, food labelling and food hygiene.

Cork Headquarters  
7 Eastgate Avenue, Eastgate  
Little Island  
Co Cork

Northern Ireland Helpdesk: 0800 085 1683  
[www.safefood.eu](http://www.safefood.eu)



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Education and Library Board Catering Managers

The Education and Library Boards are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school catering service in the controlled and maintained school sectors and for providing professional support and advice to voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools where required.

Belfast Education and Library Board  
40 Academy Street  
BELFAST  
BT1 2NQ

Tel: 028 90564183 (Catering Manager)

Southern Education and Library Board  
3 Charlemont Place  
ARMAGH  
BT61 9AX

Tel: 028 37512565 (Catering Manager)

North-Eastern Education and Library Board  
Antrim Board Centre  
17 Lough Road  
ANTRIM  
BT41 4DH

Tel: 028 94482242 (Catering Manager)

Western Education and Library Board  
1 Hospital Road  
OMAGH  
BT79 0AW

Tel: 028 82411452 (Catering Manager)

South-Eastern Education and Library Board  
Grahamsbridge Road  
Dundonald  
BELFAST  
BT16 2HS

Tel: 028 90566432 (Service Unit Manager)

## Central Health Promotion Resource Services

The health and social care trusts operate health promotion services for professionals and members of the public, as well as library services for professionals working in health and health promotion.

The services provide advice and resources on health promotion in key areas such as tobacco, nutrition, drugs, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health. They include the provision of reports, books, videos, CD-ROMs and resource packs, which can be borrowed.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Communication, Resource and Information Service

Dorothy Gardiner Building

Knockbracken Healthcare Park

Tel: 028 9056 3770

Saintfield Road

Fax: 028 9056 3766

BELFAST BT8 8BH

Email: [maureen.stephen@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:maureen.stephen@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust is also the contact for publications in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Health Improvement

Spruce House

Cushendall Road

Tel: 028 2563 5575

BALLYMENA BT43 6HL

Email: [health.promotion2@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:health.promotion2@northerntrust.hscni.net)

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Promoting Well Being Team

St Luke's Hospital

71 Loughgall Road

Tel: 028 3741 2887

ARMAGH BT61 7NQ

Email: [Janis.Faloon@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:Janis.Faloon@southerntrust.hscni.net)

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Health Promotion Department

Resources and Graphics Centre

The Hub

12c Gransha Park

Tel: 028 7186 5127

LONDONDERRY BT47 6WJ

Email: [patricia.concannon@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:patricia.concannon@westerntrust.hscni.net)



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Community Dietitians

Many dietetic departments provide a range of resources and initiatives to promote healthy eating in schools. Please contact individual departments for further information.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Nutrition and Dietetic Service

Admin Buildings

Forster Green Hospital

Saintfield Road

BELFAST BT8 4HD

Tel: 028 9063 1790

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Nutrition and Dietetic Service

LARC building

Laganvalley Hospital

LISBURN BT38 1JP

Tel: 028 9041 1792

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Causeway House

Route Complex

8E Coleraine Rd

BALLYMONEY BT53 6BP

Tel: 028 27661377

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Community Dietetic team leader

Shantallow Health Centre

Racecourse Rd

LONDONDERRY BT48 8NL

Tel: 028 71355014

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Nutrition and Dietetic Department

Daisy Hill Hospital

5 Hospital Road

NEWRY BT35 8DR

Tel: (028) 3083 5000

## City, Borough and District Councils

Local councils, and in particular their environmental health departments, can provide you with information and advice on certain aspects of workplace health. A full list of the councils and contact details can be found at [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk).

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| Antrim Borough Council                     | Tel: 028 9446 3113   |
| Ards Borough Council                       | Tel: 028 9182 4000   |
| Armagh City and District Council           | Tel: 028 3752 9600   |
| Ballymena Borough Council                  | Tel: 028 2566 0300   |
| Ballymoney Borough Council                 | Tel: 028 2766 0200   |
| Banbridge District Council                 | Tel: 028 4066 0600   |
| Belfast City Council                       | Tel: 0800 707 6965   |
| Carrickfergus Borough Council              | Tel: 028 9335 1604/5 |
| Castlereagh Borough Council                | Tel: 028 9049 4500   |
| Coleraine Borough Council                  | Tel: 028 7034 7034   |
| Cookstown District Council                 | Tel: 028 8676 2205   |
| Craigavon Borough Council                  | Tel: 028 3831 2400   |
| Derry City Council                         | Tel: 028 7136 5151   |
| Down District Council                      | Tel: 028 4461 0800   |
| Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council | Tel: 028 8772 0300   |
| Fermanagh District Council                 | Tel: 028 6632 5050   |
| Larne Borough Council                      | Tel: 028 2827 2313   |
| Limavady Borough Council                   | Tel: 028 7772 2226   |
| Lisburn City Council                       | Tel: 028 9250 9250   |
| Magherafelt District Council               | Tel: 028 7939 7979   |
| Moyle District Council                     | Tel: 028 2076 2225   |
| Newry and Mourne District Council          | Tel: 028 3031 3031   |
| Newtownabbey Borough Council               | Tel: 028 9034 0160   |
| North Down Borough Council                 | Tel: 028 9127 0371   |
| Omagh District Council                     | Tel: 028 8224 5321   |
| Strabane District Council                  | Tel: 028 7138 2204   |

# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes



## Voluntary and Industry Funded Organisations

Action Cancer  
Marlborough Park  
BELFAST BT9 6XS

Tel: 028 9080 3344  
Email: [info@actioncancer.org](mailto:info@actioncancer.org)  
Web: [www.actioncancer.org](http://www.actioncancer.org)

Action Cancer offers a health promotion programme to both primary and post-primary schools. In primary schools talks are provided through a puppet show called Wally and Wise that raises issues about physical activity, sun awareness and the dangers of smoking. The Health Action Programme is delivered in post-primary schools, providing five sessions on smoking, alcohol, healthy eating and exercise which include two practical activity sessions of cardio box and dancercise.

British Heart Foundation Northern Ireland

Admail 3987  
BELFAST  
BT1 1TG

Tel: 0845 130 8663  
Publications orderline: 0870 600 6566  
Web: [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

Provides a range of resources and curriculum links for a healthy lifestyle.

British Nutrition Foundation

High Holborn House  
52–54 High Holborn  
LONDON  
WC1V 6RQ

Tel: 020 7404 6504  
Email: [postbox@nutrition.org.uk](mailto:postbox@nutrition.org.uk)  
Web: [www.nutrition.org.uk](http://www.nutrition.org.uk)  
[www.foodafactoflife.org.uk](http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk)

The British Nutrition Foundation provides a range of healthy eating resources for schools.

Dairy Council for Northern Ireland

Shaftesbury House  
Edgewater Business Park  
Edgewater Road  
BELFAST BT3 9JQ

Tel: 028 9077 0113  
Web: [www.dairycouncil.co.uk](http://www.dairycouncil.co.uk)

The Dairy Council provides factsheets, resources and CD Roms for use in the classroom and in conjunction with CCEA organises the Young Cook of the Year Award. It also provides a 'Food and fitness' presentation and resources for Key stage 1 and 2.

Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland

Lissue House

31 Ballinderry Road  
LISBURN BT28 2SL

Tel: 028 9263 3000

Web: [www.lmcni.com](http://www.lmcni.com)

The LMC offers beef and lamb cookery demonstrations in post-primary schools throughout Northern Ireland. A website has been produced in co-ordination with home economics teachers to target Key stage 3 and 4 pupils on nutrition through the life stages. See [www.food4life.org.uk](http://www.food4life.org.uk).

Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke

21 Dublin Road

BELFAST  
BT2 7HB

Tel: 028 9032 0184

Web: [www.nichsa.com](http://www.nichsa.com)

NICHSA provides a range of leaflets, factsheets and initiatives that promote the prevention of and alleviate the suffering resulting from chest, heart and stroke illness. This includes a health programme for primary and secondary schools.

Northern Ireland Water

Northland House

3 Frederick Street  
BELFAST BT1 2ND

Tel: 028 9035 4716

Web: [www.niwater.com](http://www.niwater.com)

The education department at Northern Ireland Water offers classroom programmes tailored towards the curriculum. Visits to its two education centres can also be arranged.

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

40-44 Eglantine Avenue  
BELFAST  
BT9 6DX

Tel: 028 9066 3281

Email: [info@ulstercancer.org](mailto:info@ulstercancer.org)

Web: [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland provides two programmes for primary schools: The Genevieve Project (foundation stage) and The Fit Factor – Join the Fitness Challenge (Key stage 1).

[www.fitfactor.co.uk](http://www.fitfactor.co.uk)

## FOOD IN SCHOOLS FORUM

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Purpose

To provide strategic leadership and guidance on the Food in Schools policy which seeks to ensure food in schools is representative of the balance of good health and makes a significant contribution to childhood nutrition and that schools contribute to the development of knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices.

#### Membership:

- Department of Education (DE) (Chair)
- Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI)
- Public Health Agency (PHA) - Food in Schools Co-ordinator
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Safefood
- ELB Catering Manager representative
- Dietetic Manager, Health and Social Care Trusts

Ad-hoc membership may be considered in relation to specific tasks as appropriate.

### Specific Tasks

- ☑ To ensure support for schools and provide advice on the implementation of the Food in Schools policy, including resources and supporting structures to ensure value for money and maximising use of limited available resources
- ☑ Monitor and evaluate implementation of Food in Schools policy (via ESA<sup>9</sup> and ETI reports) and make recommendations to fully embed the policy in schools
- ☑ Monitor and evaluate adherence to continued implementation of the Nutritional Standards
- ☑ Commission research as necessary to assist in monitoring and evaluation of the Food in Schools policy
- ☑ Monitor uptake of School Meals, in particular Free School Meals, and make recommendations to increase uptake
- ☑ Agree recommendations on promotion and marketing of the policy
- ☑ Establish subgroups as necessary, including agreeing associated terms of reference
- ☑ Take cognizance of other government policies which impact on Food in Schools policy
- ☑ Consult with relevant stakeholders as deemed necessary
- ☑ Agree an annual work plan with associated funding

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<sup>9</sup> *Monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken by the Education and Library Boards until the ESA is established.*



# Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

## Food in Schools Forum - Subgroups

Subgroups will be established as deemed necessary. The following details agreed subgroups and membership:

### 1. **Nutritional Standards Subgroup (to be reviewed post ESA implementation)**

**Purpose:** To monitor and evaluate continued implementation of nutritional standards

**Members:**

- DE
- ELB Catering Managers
- PHA - Food in Schools Co-ordinator

**Specific Tasks:**

- Monitor continued adherence to nutritional standards
- Make recommendations to improve implementation of nutritional standards or to address any identified issues
- Report to the Food in Schools Forum on the implementation of nutritional standards
- Provide an annual action plan for agreement with the Food in Schools Forum

### 2. **Marketing & Promotion Subgroup**

**Purpose:** To advise on marketing and promotion activities in relation to implementation of Food in Schools policy

**Members:**

- DE (Chair)
- DHSSPS
- PHA Food in Schools Co-ordinator

- PHA marketing & promotion specialist
- Catering Manager, BELB
- FSA
- Safefood
- DE Communications Team

Specific Tasks:

- Identify key target groups for marketing and promotion and advise on priority groups
- Undertake a stocktake of existing resources available to schools and a gap analysis to inform targeting of resources
- Consider and recommend appropriate marketing and promotion activities designed to embed Food in Schools policy, taking into account priority target groups, including costings and potential funding sources
- Develop an annual marketing and promotion plan for approval by Food in Schools Forum
- Commission relevant research as appropriate
- Consult as necessary with relevant stakeholders

### 3. Resources Subgroup

Purpose: To ensure guidance and resources are available to support the implementation of the Food in Schools Policy

Members:

- PHA Food in Schools Co-ordinator (Chair)
- FSA
- CCEA
- Safefood



## Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes

### Specific Tasks:

- To undertake an audit of resources available to schools to support implementation of the policy.
- To complete a gap analysis to identify additional resource requirements and make recommendations to the Forum on how options to address any gaps.
- To make recommendations on a mechanism for signposting resources to schools.







Every School a Good School



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N PEOPLE



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**Food in Schools Policy**  
Healthy Food For Healthy Outcomes