

## **H. SCHOOL CATERING AND HEALTHY EATING**

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## H. SCHOOL CATERING AND HEALTHY EATING

References	Subject	Location
SEM	Meals at school	SEM 3.1.8
Internet	Hungry for Success	Education Website

### H.1 SCHOOL CATERING SERVICES

#### General

H.1.1 The legal background to the provision of main school meals is set out in the SEM 3.1.8. In the Western Isles, main school meals are provided by the Education Department' Schools Catering Service which is run as a discrete trading operation by the Education Department. (A Discrete Trading organisation means, broadly, that the operation is run as a non - profit making business within the Comhairle and reports to the Comhairle's Commercial Operations Board.)

#### Responsibility for management and resourcing of the Catering Service

H.1.2 The service is presently operated within the contract specifications and based on a fixed meal or meal equivalent price of a 2 course school lunch. Under the terms of Best Value there is a requirement to keep trading accounts within the Code of Practice to reflect the 'total costs' including support services expenditure and capital charges.

#### Categories

H.1.3 The meal provision at schools can be classed into 2 categories.

- a. Conventional kitchens and Dining Centres (schools which have meals transported from central kitchens). Serve a traditional lunch which is defined as a two course meal. The Head Teacher is responsible for the collection of all monies from cash paying pupils and the registering of free school meals.
- b. Cash Cafeterias. Cash is collected daily at the till in exchange for menu items along with free meal tokens or tickets which are provided for eligible children. Each free meal ticket or token has a cash value equivalent to the traditional 2 course meal.

#### Menus

H.1.4 The lunch service is based on a set 4 weekly menu cycle which a number of the smaller schools vary depending on pupils likes and dislikes but always in accordance with the nutritional standards set out in the Hungry for Success programme.

#### Mid Morning Service

H.1.5 This service, provided at the schools request, is limited to a couple of secondary schools.

#### Packed lunches

H.1.6 Provision of healthy packed lunches is currently available at 4 schools.

#### Vending machines

- H.1.7 Vending machine facilities are available for pupils in the 4 Presenting Centres to purchase healthy sandwiches, fresh fruit, water, yoghurt and milk.
- H.1.8 The Schools Catering Service takes responsibility for the management of all catering staff, for the purchase of all supplies and for other costs directly related to the provision of school meals including kitchen equipment. Meals may be cooked within schools, or in the case of smaller schools, may be transported there in insulated containers after having been cooked in larger school kitchens. In these cases, the cost of transporting the meals is also borne by the Schools Catering Service.
- H.1.9 Premises costs associated with school catering eg the cost of energy, building repairs and rates for kitchen premises are generally borne by the school although these costs are acknowledged in the allocation of devolved premises budgets so that schools are not disadvantaged where they act as catering kitchens for other, smaller schools.

### **Timing of school meals**

- H.1.10 The timing of school meals is arranged in consultation with school management. Any changes which a school proposes to make to the timing of lunch intervals and the staggering of pupil meals should be discussed in the first instance with the Operations Manager (School Catering.)

### **Charges for school meals**

#### Pupils

- H.1.11 The education authority is allowed to levy a charge (which must be the same for all pupils eating the same quantity of food.) This charge is currently set at £1.50 per meal which represents a significant subsidy on the actual meal price of some £3.00.
- H.1.12 Charges for school meals should be collected in advance from pupils (or parents) and banked in line with the procedures set out in Section P of the handbook.

#### School staff

- H.1.13 School staff are provided with free lunchtime meals where they undertake supervisory duties within the school canteen at lunchtimes. Itinerant staff may be provided with a free school meal where expenses for a meal would otherwise be met by the education authority. The School Catering Service will be reimbursed for meal expenditure on staff by the Education Department from central budgets.
- H.1.14 Itinerant staff who receive a free meal at a school may not claim any subsistence element in respect of a main meal.

### **Free School Meals**

- H.1.15 Eligible children (see section L) are entitled to a free midday meal. Application forms for free school meals are available from the Education Department and schools may at their discretion keep a supply of these on hand for parents wishing to make an application. The forms and associated guidance are also available on and can be downloaded from the Comhairle's Internet site.
- H.1.16 All applications for free schools meals are handled in confidence by central Education Department staff who will contact the Department for Work and Pensions to confirm the applicant's eligibility for free school meals for their children. (The application for free school meals has now been combined with the application form for clothing grants so that one approach to the DWP is required only.) Entitlement to free school meals, when established, will be notified to schools by the Department. Pupils may not be provided with free school meals until the school has been advised that the entitlement has been confirmed, regardless

of any local knowledge about the circumstances of a family. The Department will of course make all efforts to process claims speedily and as many applications are submitted prior to the start of term, the overwhelming number of pupils entitled to free school meals will have been confirmed timeously before term commences.

- H.1.17 Occasionally, schools may experience difficulty in obtaining payment for school meals from parents whose children are not entitled to a free school meal. School may of course use their discretion where a parent has forgotten to provide payment on a particular day. However, persistent non-payment of school meal charges will mean that school meals will require to be withdrawn for that child, however unwelcome that course of action might prove.

### **Packed lunch facilities**

- H.1.18 Parents are entitled to provide packed lunches for their child to eat at lunchtime and all schools are required to provide appropriate facilities for consumption of packed lunches. Schools are not required to provide storage facilities for meals.

### **Breakfast and other healthy eating clubs**

- H.1.19 A number of schools operate breakfast or similar eating clubs which are outwith the department's main catering provision. Schools are free to charge for such provision but should endeavour to charge no more than the cost of any materials to ensure the inclusion of pupils whose parents would be entitled to free school meals at midday.
- H.1.20 In providing any snacks outwith the lunchtime meal, schools should ensure that strict food hygiene practices are observed, following the guidance in SEM 4.4.3.1 and seeking the advice of the school's catering staff or the Schools Catering Service where required. Staff or volunteers involved in the preparation of any such snacks may require to undertake food hygiene training and the school should discuss any possible with their Business Support Officer and conducting a Risk Assessment where possible. Simple guidelines for food tasting and preparation are set out at Appendix H3 but schools may also discuss any concerns which they have with the Schools Catering Management or with the Comhairle's Assistant Health and Safety Officer.
- H.1.21 In providing snacks, schools should have regard to the general principles of healthy eating and should ensure that the snacks or goods provided conform with healthy eating principles. Further advice on this is available from the Schools Catering Services.
- H.1.22 A specimen school "Healthy Eating Policy" is set out at Appendix H.4.

## **H.2 SCHOOL TUCK SHOPS**

- H.2.1 A number of schools operate school tuck shops with any profit generally directed to school funds. Guidance and information on the running of school tuck shops in line with healthy eating policies can be found at the [teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving/foodanddrink/) site on <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving/foodanddrink/>.
- H.2.2 Schools will be aware that the Comhairle no longer permits the sale of full sugar drinks in schools and these drinks should no longer be included in school tuck shop provision. Any remaining full sugar drink stocks held in schools should be disposed of other than by sale to pupils.

## **H.3 HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS**

### **General**

- H.3.1 In November 2001, the Scottish Executive announced the setting up of an Expert Panel on

School Meals as part of plans to improve the provision, presentation and nutritional content of school meals for all Scotland's children as part of the Executive's drive to improve the health and social well being of children in Scotland. The Panel (which convened in January 2002 and reported in November 2002) was remitted to provide costed recommendations and an implementation strategy to:

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

H.3.2 The final report of the Scottish Executive's Expert Panel on School Meals set out their vision for a revitalised school meals service in Scotland and presented a number of recommendations connecting school meals with the curriculum as a key aspect of health education and health promotion. (A summary of the recommendations is set out at Appendix H.1.) For the first time in the UK, national nutrient-based standards for school lunches were proposed and detailed mechanisms for monitoring these standards are set out.

H.3.3 The Expert Panel also saw the key agents of success in implementing these standards as local authorities working in partnership with catering professionals, schools and the school communities – teachers, parents and pupils themselves. They therefore set out a system of National Standards under local, partnership-operated control.

H.3.4 A copy of the Expert Panel's final "Hungry for Success" report can be viewed on the Education section of the Comhairle's Intranet site.

### **INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

H.3.5 The Education Department has set up a Working Group to take forward the report's recommendations. The Working Group's remit and membership is set out at Appendix H.2.

#### **Establishing standards for school meals**

H.3.7 Revised nutritional standards for school meals and computer software to assess the meeting of standards has been developed. Revised menus reflecting the new nutritional standards will be introduced in all primary schools by the Scottish Executive's target date of December 2004 and in all Secondary schools by the target date of December 2006.

#### **Eliminating any stigma attached to taking free school meals**

H.3.8 There is still stigma attached to the taking of free school meals. The precise effect on uptake is not calculable as information on wages levels of households with school age children is not easily available at a local level. However stigma is likely to be a definite factor in preventing some families from taking up their entitlement, particularly where the perception of any family may be that such an application is known to the local community. The Department has revised its free school meals (and clothing grant) application forms and guidance to make clear to applicants that such applications are handled in the strictest confidence and that any application for assistance will not become a matter of general knowledge in the community. (This has been underlined by local newspaper advertisement. ) Guidance and application forms are also available on the Comhairle's website and the department is discussing with the Comhairle's Library Service the possibility of providing free printing facilities at Library computers to members of the public who wish to print out Education Department forms.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

H.3.9 Section 5 of the Hungry for Success Report notes that continued commitment and efforts on the part of local authorities is central to the successful implementation of its recommendations. The Key recommendations relating to monitoring in this section note that

the main mechanism for monitoring delivery of the National Priorities for Education is through the School Improvement Framework which is now in effect.

- H.3.10 National Priorities 2 and 3 provide a vehicle for monitoring the implementation of improvements in school lunches as follows:

**National Priority 2:**

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

Performance measures and quality indicators include, for education authorities: the number and percentage of schools with Health Promoting School Status (primary and secondary schools separately). (Ministers have set as an objective that all schools should become Health Promoting Schools by 2007)

**National Priority 3**

Outcome: every pupil benefits equally from education.

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

- H.3.11 The Scottish Executive proposed levels of monitoring to ensure the effective implementation of the Hungry for Success recommendations.

a.) **Level 1 Monitoring (quantitative data)**

As part of annual reporting on National Priorities the authority will monitor the quantitative performance measures as set out at 2.1 above (ie on Health Promoting schools and free school meal uptake. The authority will also report annually on nutrient standards and on the reduction of any stigma attached to free school meals and how the Western Isles has improved uptake of school meals generally (by December 2004 for Primary schools and by December 2006 for Secondary schools.) All of these reports will be included in the education authority's annual Standards and Quality Report which is submitted to the Scottish Executive, elected members and made available for school pupil, parent and community access .

b.) **Level 2 Monitoring (qualitative data)**

In line with the recommendations of the Hungry for Success report, that Level 2 monitoring of qualitative issues be undertaken by schools and the Education Department as part of the normal cycle of school planning and evaluation (in addition to that inspection and assessment which will be undertaken by HM Inspectorate of Education as part of the formal HMI inspection process.) Good practice identified as part of this process will be communicated to schools through the Department's normal Quality Improvement processes and reported annually as part of the Department's annual report.

c.) **Level 3 monitoring (by HMIE)**

Level 3 monitoring will be undertaken by HMIE at the behest of the Scottish Executive with a view to reporting on progress towards the 2006 targets.

d.) **Level 4 monitoring (by SEED)**

Level 4 monitoring will be undertaken in 2007 by independent researchers commissioned by the Scottish Executive Education Department and will assess the overall implementation and impact of the recommendations.

**FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS**

H.3.12 In recognition of the additional costs associated with the new nutritional standards and other aspects of the Hungry for Success initiative (eg improvements to school eating facilities and equipment) the Scottish Executive has made additional funding available to the Comhairle. Funding for additional supervision by non-teaching staff was met separately under the National McCrone agreement. The funding packaged also specifically excludes Smartcard technology (which is being addressed separately through the Modernising Government Fund) and any improvements to dining areas which will be funded through the School Estates programmes and through Public Private Partnerships where appropriate.

#### **H.4 DRINKING WATER IN SCHOOLS**

H.4.1 All school pupils should have ready access to a supply of good drinking water. Any difficulties in obtaining a supply of good mains drinking water should be reported immediately to the Technical Services Department through the School's Property Maintenance Officer. Any schools wishing to facilitate pupils' use of drinking water eg through the purchase and use of water bottles should discuss the issue with the Education Authority's Integrated Community Schools section.

**“HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS REPORT”**

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

- Taking account of the role of the school meals service as part of education and health strategies in any Best Value Review
- Developing a policy for delivering, in partnership with parents and carers, medically prescribed diets and appropriate provision for children with special needs
- Using Scottish Executive guidance, and guided by COSLA, to develop strategies and policies for implementing the recommendations into mainstream planning processes that will empower and enable schools and school communities to adopt the recommendations and have nutrient standards in place in primary and secondary by December 2004 and 2006 respectively
- Adopting early introduction of a school meal application for multiple use of Smart cards, in particular in secondary schools
- Ensuring adequate provision of smart card facilities in schools and ensuring there are sufficient validators in easily accessed areas within schools
- Considering the lunchtime experience when examining school day structures
- Supporting and working with schools and others to develop knowledge and awareness of dietary needs of pupils from minority ethnic and special religious cultures
- Promoting, facilitating and supporting partnership working practices in schools
- Considering deploying classroom and dining room assistant supervisory roles in dining rooms
- Considering dining refurbishment as a priority in school estates review, taking into consideration furniture design, layout and usage
- Considering the introduction of incentive schemes to recognise innovation and celebrate success in promoting nutritious choices and increasing uptake of school meals
- Reviewing catering contracts to ensure there are no barriers to meeting the standards for school meals as a consequence of introducing measures to monitor nutrient standards
- Developing formal arrangements with local NHS Boards and Trusts to secure dietetic advice and help in meeting nutrient standards
- Ensuring that schools developing as health promoting schools adopt the key principles set out in Para 4 of the Report
- Putting in place arrangements for level one monitoring starting 2003

**A full copy of the “Hungry for Success” report can be accessed on the Comhairle’s Intranet site under [www.cne-siar.gov.uk/education](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/education).**

**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**“HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS”WORKING GROUP**

**1. MEMBERSHIP**

Norman L Macdonald	Chair of Education and Children’s Services
Jennet Gordon	Head of Educational Resources
Catherine Maclennan	Inclusion and Early Education (Curriculum)
Donald Macleod	Integration Manager, New Community Schools
Kitty MacCuish	Operations Manager, School Meals
Cathie Ann Macleod	Principal Officer (Secondary and Human Resources)
Agnes Macdonald	Lionel Primary School
Liz Carmichael	Nicolson Institute
Pupil Representatives	Nicolson Institute

**Plus Expertise as required eg on Health and nutrition**

**2. Remit of Group**

To provide an appropriate implementation programme that will address the recommendations of the ‘Hungry for Success’ report and to implement necessary changes within the proposed timescales and within the financial resources made available for this purpose

**3. Key Tasks**

- To undertake an audit of current service provision in terms of range of service, nutritional content of meals, level of uptake, charges for meals, uptake of free meal entitlement, condition of buildings etc
- To take account of all health promoting initiatives currently taking place within schools and to establish links with any proposed changes
- To establish how links can be formed between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in schools
- To explore feasibility, costings and implications for the introduction of the smart card system
- To incorporate the new nutrient standards into school meal provision - by Dec 2004 for primary, by December 2006 for secondary

**Key Tasks (ctd)**

- To provide policy on the provision of free meals and to review school meals charging policy
- To examine the potential for refurbishment of dining environments
- To look at possible incentive schemes to promote healthier options.
- To consult all relevant stakeholders throughout the process
- To establish relevant monitoring and evaluation arrangements as required by HM Inspectorate

### Guidelines for Food Tasting and Preparation at School

#### General

Staff should carry out a risk assessment before undertaking any activities associated with food particularly with regard to using equipment safely and allergies to food. All ingredients must be checked for 'use before dates' and stored in an appropriate place. All non-tinned/fresh food must be stored in the refrigerator and care should be taken to avoid cross-contamination. No unpasteurised milk products or uncooked meat products should be used in school. Fresh fruit and vegetables should be washed before use. Working surfaces should be wiped with sanitiser prior to baking, cooking or food tasting for hygiene purposes.

A copy of the following should be displayed and discussed with pupils:

#### When preparing, cooking and tasting food:

Remove all rings, watches and bracelets that may trap germs and bacteria.

Wash hands with antibacterial soap

Wear an apron

Roll up sleeves.

Tie back long hair.

Make sure all cuts are covered with a plaster.

Avoid food preparation if suffering from nose, throat or bowel problems.

Always wash hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap and a nailbrush before starting food preparation and after:

- (a) visiting the toilet
- (b) blowing your nose
- (c) coughing or sneezing
- (d) touching hair, or other parts of the body, or anybody else

When tasting do not pick up a piece of food and then replace it– once handled, a piece of food should be placed on your own plate.

Do not place a spoon or 'dipper' or cocktail stick back in the food after tasting.

Ensure food is covered if left lying out or put it into the fridge.

#### Clearing up

When you have finished, scrape any waste solids on to a paper towel and place in the bin.

All dishes/utensils should be washed up in sink in the staffroom. Wash plate thoroughly in hot soapy water.

Use a clean tea-towel to dry dishes.

Save only food which comes in re-sealable containers, store according to manufacturers' instructions and use by 'sell by' date.

Make sure all work surfaces are thoroughly wiped with anti-bacterial spray, and cloths washed and dried.

The attached letter should be sent to parents prior to the pupils participating in food tasting.

school's name and address

Dear Parent

We plan to do a food tasting lesson on ..... with [ Primary/Secondary ..... ]

Staff will buy the food if possible on the morning of the food tasting session and transport it to the school where it will be kept refrigerated until required. We will see that the food which your child tastes will be presented in the freshest and most hygienic manner.

We aim to sample the following foods:

Example:

Please let us know if you do not wish your child to sample the above of if they are allergic to any of the following. Please tick those foods that your child should avoid:

Dairy Products  Nuts  Eggs  Wheat

Other

.....  
.....



**SAMPLE SCHOOL HEALTHY EATING POLICY**

**(UNDER CONSULTATION)**