

Top tips for Meeting the School Foods Standards

1. **As part of the School Food Plan, the School Food Standards apply to:**

- the food and drink provided in local authority maintained primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units in England
- academies (established September 2008 and September 2010) and those signing the new funding agreements from June 2014
- sixth forms that are part of secondary schools, (even those in a separate building or on a different site), but do not apply to the sixth form colleges or further education colleges
- maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools
- after school clubs run on school premises.

2. **Manage expectations.**

When consulting with stakeholder groups about menu content, make sure that they are broadly aware of the standards with which you need to comply. Prominently display the standards within the dining room and in public areas within school. Include within newsletters and other communications. Posters can be downloaded directly from the School Food Plan website www.schoolfoodplan/standards/

3. To help reduce levels of salt, saturated fat and sugar in pupil diets, remember to use Government Buying Standards for food and catering services.

4. **There are standards pertaining to the use of:**

- Fruit and vegetables
- Milk and Dairy
- Starchy Foods
- Foods high in Salt, Sugar and Fat
- Proteins
- Drinks
- Food provided outside the lunch period.

5. The objective of the standards is to encourage children to develop healthy eating habits – in part by providing variety in the diet. Therefore, even if your burgers (for example) are home-made and use the best quality lean mince, in order to encourage variety, they must not be repeated more than is permitted by the standards.

6. Always make sure that fruit and vegetables are displayed prominently and attractively. Buy seasonal whenever possible. Frequently remind pupils that you will cut fruit up for them. Do not wait for them to ask.

7. Frequently carry out special promotions around the vegetarian options. Introduce recognition schemes for those pupils prepared to try them.

8. From the start, ensure that all parents are aware that lunch is part of the education process and that learning to enjoy a balanced diet is treated in the same way as any other lesson.

9. Introduce a policy whereby pupils are automatically served all the appropriate components of the meal – even if only a taster-sized portion. They are much more likely to taste foods once they are actually on the plate.

10. Ensure that you have sufficient staff available over lunch to work with pupils and to actively encourage them to try the new foods. Train them in effective encouragement techniques.

11. Remove any incentives for pupils to dispose of the meal that they have selected e.g. get out to play quicker.

12. The school should ensure that its caterers access and adhere to ‘School Food Standards - A Practical Guide for Schools their Cooks and Caterers’. This can be downloaded from the School Food Plan website and gives many more tips for implementing the standards. Suitable recipes and sample menus can be found on the Children’s Food Trust website.

13. On line training on the application of the standards can be found at www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/learningnetwork

14. The Children’s Food Trust provide a menu checking service. Schools with compliant menus are then able to use the ‘menu checked logo’ on their promotional materials.

15. To further demonstrate best practice in your approach to menus, apply for the ‘Children’s Food Trust Award’ www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/award