

(Insert school/company logo here)

Dear (inset head teacher name here)

**Hotober – encouraging schools to serve hot meals at lunchtime by 1st October 2020**

We understand the return to school has been challenging, not least when it comes to providing food at lunchtime. We also understand in many schools, the lunchtime meal options may have changed as everyone finds their way during the first few weeks back. It might not have been possible to provide hot food from the start of term, but we all recognise the importance of pupils enjoying hot nutritious food.

LACA (the school food people) have created an initiative called **Hotober**, designed to encourage schools to allow pupils back to hot meals as quickly as possible – ideally by the 1st October – hence the name **Hotober.** This is also census day, a date we know many schools are keen to encourage lunch uptake on.

LACA sits at the heart of school food delivery, representing over 3,300 different organisations and individuals, all dedicated to ensuring that children get the benefits from a healthy, nutritious school lunch.

Many school caterers have been performing ‘key worker’ duties throughout the pandemic, so are best placed to deliver hot meals safely. We know the benefits to children’s attainment and development that eating a balanced diet can make, so it’s paramount they return as soon as possible. Meal uptake is down in many schools where a cold limited choice is available, which isn’t good for parents, pupils or, indeed, the caterers.

**Hotober** resources are available and can be downloaded for free at: www.thegreatschoollunch.co.uk/resources. You will find everything you need to inform parents about the return to serving hot meals safely at school.

The initiative has been warmly received by MP’s and other stakeholders, many being happy to have a school lunch within their constituencies to show their support and to demonstrate they are a safe option for children. We have created an invitation for you to send to them should you so wish.

**National School Meals Week (NSMW) 2020**

NSMW, has always been an opportunity to promote how good school food really is. This year the event will run from 9th – 13th November and has 5 simple themes to promote the benefits of a hot meal and get children excited about school lunches once more. We hope you will be able to get involved – more details will follow at [www.nsmw.org.uk](http://www.nsmw.org.uk)

Thank you for your ongoing support

**LACA’s NSMW Team**