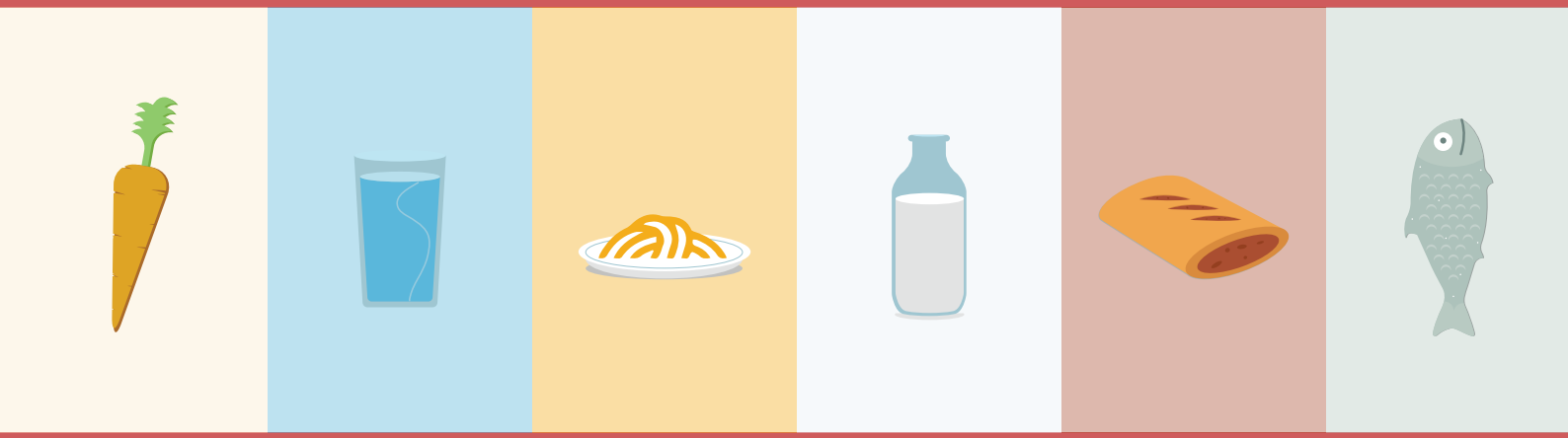
School Food Standards

A practical guide for schools their cooks and caterers



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Eating in school should be a pleasurable experience: time spent sharing good food with peers and teachers.

These school food standards are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they get the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day. It is just as important to cook food that looks good and tastes delicious; to talk to children about what is on offer and recommend dishes; to reduce queuing; and to serve the food in a pleasant environment where they can eat with their friends.

As a general principle, it is important to provide a wide range of foods across the week. Variety is key – whether it is different fruits, vegetables, grains, pulses or types of meat and fish. Children love to hear the stories behind their food. Use fresh, sustainable and locally-sourced ingredients (best of all, from the school vegetable garden) and talk to them about what they are eating. Go to **www.schoolfoodplan.com/www** to find examples of what other schools are doing to encourage children to eat well.

Remember to use **Government Buying Standards** for Food and Catering Services alongside these standards to help reduce salt, saturated fat and sugar in children's diets.

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A summary of the mandatory food-based standards. To print off a poster (to put on your kitchen wall) please go to:
www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards

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www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards

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For lunch and food served other than lunch. To print, please go to:
www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards

11 September 2014 - V2c

The standards for *school lunches*

Starchy foods

One or more portions of food from this group every day

Three or more different starchy foods each week

One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food each week

Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week
(applies across the whole school day)

Bread - with no added fat or oil - must be available every day

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

A portion of food from this group every day

A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week

Oily fish once or more every three weeks

For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein on three or more days each week

A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade, and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once each week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools
(applies across the whole school day)

Fruit and Vegetables

One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day

One or more portions of fruit every day

A dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times each week

At least three different fruits and three different vegetables each week

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

No more than two portions of food that have been deep-fried, batter-coated, or breadcrumb-coated, each week
(applies across the whole school day)

No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week
(applies across the whole school day)

No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat
(applies across the whole school day)

Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch with fruit or vegetables or dairy food

No confectionery, chocolate or chocolate-coated products
(applies across the whole school day)

Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionery

Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked
(applies across the whole school day)

Any condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful
(applies across the whole school day)

Milk and dairy

A portion of food from this group every day

Lower fat milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours

Healthier drinks

applies across the whole school day

Free, fresh drinking water at all times

The only drinks permitted are:

- Plain water (still or carbonated)
- Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk
- Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls)
- Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks
- Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey)
- Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey
- Tea, coffee, hot chocolate

Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls of fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice

Implementing the standards

A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of:

1. **Plenty of fruit and vegetables**
2. **Plenty of unrefined starchy foods**
3. **Some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein**
4. **Some milk and dairy foods**

(and a small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar and/or salt)

Starchy foods

WHY IS THIS FOOD GROUP IMPORTANT?

Starchy food is an important source of energy and B vitamins. Flour is fortified with iron and calcium too.

Wholegrain varieties of bread and pasta are good sources of fibre, which is important for a healthy digestive system.

Starchy foods help children feel full, so they are less likely to snack on foods high in fat, saturated fat, sugar, or salt.

TOP TIPS

Use wholegrain varieties of starchy foods. Try using a 50:50 mix for pasta and rice.

Use at least half wholemeal or granary flour when making bread, puddings, cakes, biscuits, batters and sauces.

Use different types of bread, and look for products with higher fibre.

Do not add salt to water when cooking pasta, rice and other starchy foods. Instead, add flavour to the main dish by using herbs, spices, garlic and vegetables.

Fruit and Vegetables

WHY IS THIS FOOD GROUP IMPORTANT?

Getting children to eat more fruit and vegetables (particularly vegetables) is vital for good health. Introducing children to a wide variety of fruit and vegetables establishes healthy eating habits for life, reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

Fruit and vegetables are a good source of essential vitamins and minerals. They are also often a good source of fibre.

Fruit and vegetables add colour, flavour and variety to meals.

TOP TIPS

Make sure your 'meal deals' always contain at least one portion of vegetable and one portion of fruit.

Provide at least two different coloured vegetables and fruits each day.

Buy fruit and vegetables that are in season.

Choose canned products in water or 'natural juice', with no added salt or sugar.

Don't serve baked beans more than once a week, and choose low-sugar and low-salt varieties.

Pulses count as vegetables. (However, if you are serving pulses as a non-dairy protein for vegetarians, you will need a separate vegetable serving as well).

Steam vegetables or boil them in a minimal amount of water.

Make sure that fruit and vegetables are displayed prominently and attractively. Talk to the children to encourage them to try new vegetable and fruit dishes.

Using produce from the school garden is a great way to encourage children to try new vegetables and fruit.

Price a portion of fruit so that it's cheaper than a hot or cold dessert.

For the benefit of picky eaters, smuggle lots of vegetables into composite dishes such as Bolognese or chilli con carne.

Milk and dairy

WHY IS THIS FOOD GROUP IMPORTANT?

Dairy foods are a rich source of energy, protein, calcium, vitamin A and riboflavin.

TOP TIPS

Hard cheeses such as cheddar tend to be higher in saturated fat than softer cheese. When using hard cheeses, choose stronger-tasting varieties and use smaller amounts.

Offer frozen yoghurt as an alternative to ice cream.

Buy low-sugar varieties of milkshakes and yoghurt drinks. Better still, make them yourself using fruit to sweeten them.

The food-based standards specify which types of food should be served at school, and how often. Remember to use **Government Buying Standards** for Food and Catering Services (see **http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying**) alongside these standards to help reduce salt, saturated fat and sugar in children's diets.

You can find a list of frequently asked questions about the revised school foods standards at: **http://tinyurl.com/o8bslpl**

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

WHY IS THIS FOOD GROUP IMPORTANT?

Foods from this group provide protein and essential minerals, including iron and zinc.

Oily fish provides omega-3 fatty acids (which are beneficial to health) and vitamins A and D.

TOP TIPS

Be aware that canned tuna is not an oily fish as the omega-3 fatty acids are destroyed in the canning process.

Ensure vegetarian meals are as varied as the rest of the menu by using pulses twice a week, soya, tofu, or Quorn™ once or twice each week, and eggs and cheese once or twice each week.

Encourage all children to have a meat-free day each week, using alternatives such as pulses, soya mince, tofu and Quorn™.

Go to the Marine Stewardship Council (**www.msc.org**) for advice on buying responsibly sourced fish.

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LIMIT PROVISION OF FOOD FROM THIS GROUP?

Foods from this group are often high in energy (calories) but provide few other nutrients.

Reducing saturated fat intake can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Eating unsaturated fats instead, which are found in foods such as oily fish, nuts and seeds, and sunflower and olive oils, can help lower blood cholesterol.

Too much salt can encourage a taste for salty foods, potentially leading to high blood pressure in later life.

High sugar intake provides unnecessary calories and can lead to weight gain and tooth decay.

TOP TIPS

Saturated fat is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, so choose mono- and poly-unsaturated fats – such as rapeseed, soya, sunflower and olive oils – wherever possible for cooking or salad dressings.

Avoid products that list partially hydrogenated fat or oil on the label.

Use higher fibre ingredients, such as wholemeal flour, alongside or instead of white flour.

Reduce the amount of sugar used in dishes. Use fresh or dried fruit to sweeten dishes.

Ask suppliers for nutritional information, and read food labels to check the amount of fat, saturated fat, salt and sugars in their products.

Instead of salt, use herbs, spices, garlic, vegetables and fruits to add flavour to dishes.

Do not use flavour enhancers such as MSG or E621. These can be very high in sodium.

Choose biscuits, cakes and pastries that are lower in fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt. Where possible, choose products that meet the Responsibility Deal targets. **https://responsibilitydeal.dh.gov.uk**

Healthier drinks

WHY ARE HEALTHY DRINKS IMPORTANT?

Water should be the default drink for every child. The more it is offered, the more readily they will accept it. Sugary or sweetened drinks often have no nutritional value, contribute to weight gain, and can cause tooth decay.

TOP TIPS

Provide jugs of fresh tap water together with cups or glasses on tables and at the serving counter.

Consider installing a water cooler which uses tap water, or water fountains in the dining room and around the school.

Provide drinks that are unsweetened, unfortified and additive-free.

Avoid drinks containing preservatives, flavourings, colourings and sweeteners.

Portion sizes and food groups

Starchy foods

This includes all breads, potatoes, rice, couscous, bulgur wheat, semolina, tapioca, maize, cornmeal, noodles and pasta, oats, millet, barley, buckwheat, rye, spelt, plantain, yam, sweet potato, and cassava.

Typical portion sizes (grams/mls/household measures) raw and cooked food

Food		Primary 4-10 year olds	Secondary 11-18 year olds
Bread: includes white, wholemeal, granary, brown, wheatgerm, multigrain, potato bread, chapattis, plain baked naan, rotis, rolls, bagels, pitta, wraps		(50-70g) 1-2 slices of medium bread 1 small roll 1 small or ½ large bagel 1 small pitta 2 6" wraps 1 10" wrap	(80-100g) 2 thick slices of bread 1 large roll or sub roll 1 large bagel 1 large pitta 1 12" wrap
Potatoes or sweet potato: includes boiled and mashed	Raw	120-170g	200-250g
Jacket and baked potatoes	Raw	200-280g	330-410g
Other starchy root vegetables: includes yam, plantain, cocoyam and cassava	Raw	100-150g	150-200g
Pasta and noodles: includes white and wholemeal spaghetti, noodles and pasta shapes	Dried[2]	45-65g	65-80g
Rice: includes white and brown rice	Dried[3]	35-55g	55-65g
Other grains: includes couscous, bulgur wheat, maize (polenta) and cornmeal	Dried	40-60g	60-70g
Starchy foods where fat or oil has been added before or during the cooking process: include roast or sautéed potatoes, chips, potato wedges, pre-prepared potato products, fried rice, bread, or noodles, hash browns, garlic bread, Yorkshire pudding, chapattis and naan made with fat, pancakes and waffles cooked in oil.			
Potatoes cooked in oil or fat: includes roast or sautéed potatoes, chips, potato wedges, other processed potato products such as waffles	Raw	70-100g	120-150g
Garlic bread (as an accompaniment)		20g 1 slice	40g 2 slices
Bread with no added fat or oil must be available every day. All types of plain bread with no added fat or oil, including brown, wholemeal, granary, white, mixtures of white and wholemeal, pitta, rolls, chapattis, naan, ciabatta, and herb bread.			

Note: **Wholegrain (i.e. made with, or containing whole grain):** starchy wholegrains include wholemeal, granary flour, bread and bread products, wholewheat pasta, brown rice and oats. Higher-fibre white bread, 50/50 bread, half/half wholegrain and white mixes, such as 50/50 mix of brown and white rice, 50/50 whole wheat and white pasta.

[1] Based on average weight change of wholemeal and white spaghetti, pasta shapes and noodles
[2] Based on average weight change of white and brown rice

Fruit and Vegetables

This includes vegetables in all forms, including fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced, as well as pulses such as beans and lentils. Vegetables or salad should be offered as an accompaniment to every meal, in addition to any vegetables used as ingredients in composite dishes such as casseroles and stews. Potatoes are classed as a starchy food and are not included in this food group.

Typical portion sizes (grams/mls/household measures) raw and cooked food

Food		Primary 4-10 year olds	Secondary 11-18 year olds
Vegetables or mixed salad, salad bars	Raw	40-60g	80g
Vegetables including peas, green beans, sweetcorn, carrots, mixed vegetables, cauliflower, broccoli, swede, turnip, leek, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, spinach, spring greens	Cooked	40-60g 1-2 tablespoons	80g 2-3 tablespoons
Pulses include lentils, kidney beans, chick peas	Dried[1]	15-20g	30g
	Cooked	40-60g 1-2 tablespoons	80g 3 tablespoons
Baked beans in tomato sauce (as an accompaniment)	Cooked	50-70g 1-2 tablespoons	90-100g 3 tablespoons
Vegetable-based soup	Cooked	200-250g	250-300g
Fruits in all forms, including fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced. Fruits can be provided within other dishes - for example, fruit-based desserts such as crumbles.			
Large-size fruit, e.g. apples, pears, bananas, peaches	Raw	75-100g 1 small sized fruit with skin	100-150g 1 medium sized fruit with skin
Medium-size fruit, e.g. satsumas, tangerines, plums, apricots, kiwis	Raw	50-100g 1 fruit with skin	80-100g 1-2 fruits with skin
Small fruits, e.g. strawberries, raspberries, grapes	Raw	40-60g 10-15 fruits	80g 15-20 fruits
Dried fruit, e.g. raisins, sultanas, apricots	Dried	15-30g ½ - 1 tablespoon	25-30g 1 tablespoon
All fruit-based desserts should have a content of at least 50% fruit measured by weight of the raw ingredients (e.g. fruit crumble, fruit pie, fruit sponge, fruit cobbler, fruit jelly). Fruit used as decoration or jam added to a dessert does not count towards this standard.			
Fruit salad, fruit tinned in juice and stewed fruit	Raw/cooked	65-100g (40 g min fruit) 2-3 tablespoons	130g 80g min fruit) 3-4 tablespoons

[3]Based on average weight change of chickpeas, kidney beans and green lentils

Portion sizes and food groups

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

This includes fresh and frozen meat, poultry, fresh, frozen and canned fish, shellfish, eggs, meat alternatives (including products such as soya and Quorn™), tofu, pulses such as beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans), chickpeas, lentils (red, green, brown and puy) and nuts.

Typical portion sizes (grams/mls/household measures) raw and cooked food

Food		Primary 4-10 year olds	Secondary 11-18 year olds
Roast red meat includes beef, lamb, pork, veal, venison and goat (this is also the portion size for baked potato and sandwich fillings).	Raw	50-80g	80-95g
Roast poultry includes chicken, turkey and duck, as well as dishes or products made from these meats (this is also the portion size for baked potato and sandwich fillings).	Raw	60-85g	85-125g
Red meat or poultry in dishes such as casserole, stew, pie, or curry. **Note**: *weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein based food, such as beans, cheese, or milk.*	Raw	50-75g	75-90g
Meat-based soup	Cooked	200-250g	250-300g
White fish such as pollock, hake, coley, cod, haddock and plaice – whether cooked alone, or in a dish such as a casserole or fish pie, or as a breaded or battered product	Raw	60-90g	90-125g
Oily fish, such as fresh, tinned 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	Raw	55-80g	80-110g
Fish or shellfish such as tuna, salmon, mackerel and prawns, served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich	Cooked	50-70g	70-100g
Breaded or battered fish portions and products such as fish cakes, fish fingers, and fish goujons.	Cooked	55-80g	85-95g
Egg served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich	Cooked	1 egg	1-2 eggs
Meat alternatives made from soya beans (such as soya mince and tofu) and Quorn™ (in dishes such as vegetarian casserole, stew, pie, or curry). **Note**: *weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein-based food such as beans, cheese, or milk*	Cooked	50-70g	70-100g
Pulses such as beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans), chickpeas, lentils (red, green, brown and puy).	Raw	20-25g	40-45g
	Cooked	50-60g 1-2 heaped tablespoons	100-120g 2-3 heaped tablespoons
Vegetarian sausages, burgers, nut cutlets	Raw/cooked	50-70g	70-100g
Meat products			
Sausages made from beef, lamb or pork	Raw	50-75g 1 sausage	75-90g 1-2 sausages
Burgers	Raw	55-80g	80-100g
Scotch pies, bridies, sausage rolls, Cornish pasty, encased meat pastry pies, cold pork pie (e.g. Melton Mowbray)	Cooked	80g	110g
Breaded or battered shaped chicken and turkey products, e.g. nuggets, goujons, burgers	Cooked	50-70g	70-100g

Milk and dairy

This includes all types of milk, cheese, yoghurt (including plain or fruit, frozen and drinking yoghurt), or fromage frais, milk-based sauces, custard (made with milk), puddings made from milk and milk-based sauces.

Food	Primary 4-10 year olds	Secondary 11-18 year olds
Lower-fat drinking milk	150-200 mls	200-250 mls
Milk puddings and whips made with milk	100-120g	120-150g
Custard made with milk (e.g. served with fruit); portion size excludes fruit	80-100g	100-120g
Yoghurts	80-120g	120-150g
Cheese *(added to salads, baked potatoes, sandwiches or crackers)*	20-30g	30-40g

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

Deep fried foods: including those deep fried or flash fried in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process, such as chips (including oven chips), potato waffles, hash browns, samosas, plantain chips, spring rolls, doughnuts, pakora and bhajis.		Refer to relevant portion size table
Batter-coated and breadcrumb-coated foods: including any bought-in or homemade products such as chicken nuggets, fish fingers, battered onion rings and tempura.		Refer to relevant portion size table
Pastry: including shortcrust, flaky, filo, choux and puff, used in quiches, meat pies, fruit pies, fruit tarts, sausage rolls, pasties, samosa.		Refer to relevant portion size table
Desserts: include cereal and starch based desserts such as rice, semolina, tapioca pudding, fruit-based desserts such as jelly, fruit compote, crumbles, and sponge puddings, vegetable-based desserts such as soya-based mousse, egg-based desserts such as ready to eat products and products prepared from egg such as flans, egg custard, custard fillings in pies, meringues, dairy-based desserts such as puddings with dairy-based fillings, fruit or flavoured yoghurt or other fermented milk and/or milk products, ice cream, mousse and fat-based desserts, such as ice cream, made with vegetable fats.		
Fruit pies, sponge puddings or crumbles	80-100g	100-120g
Fruit jelly (portion size excludes fruit)	80-100g	100-120g
Cakes and biscuits: include manufactured, bought-in products and prepared from scratch cakes and biscuits such as individual cakes, buns and pastries, scones, sweet and savoury biscuits.		
Cakes, tray bakes, muffins, scones, doughnuts	40-50g	50-60g
Biscuits and flapjack	25-30g	30-40g
Ice cream	60-80g	100g
Pizza base	50-70g	80-100g
Savoury crackers, bread sticks (served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods); portion size excludes fruit.	10-15g 1-2 crackers	15-30g 2-3 crackers
Condiments: include ketchup, mayonnaise, salad cream, brown sauce, chutney.	no more than 10g, or one teaspoonful	
Gravy	20-30g 1 tablespoon	40-50g 2 tablespoons
'Snacks' means pre-packaged items other than confectionery, sandwiches, cakes or biscuits, which are ready to eat without further preparation and which consist of or include as a basic ingredient potato, cereals, soya, nuts, seeds, fruit or vegetables.		Refer to relevant portion size table for fruit, vegetables and crackers
Confectionery: includes cereal bars, processed fruit bars, non-chocolate confectionary (whether or not containing sugar), chocolate in any form (except hot chocolate), any product containing or wholly or partially coated with chocolate and any chocolate-flavoured substance. Cocoa is permitted.		Not permitted - no portion sizes provided

Healthier Drinks

Fruit/vegetable juice (maximum portion size)	150 mls	150 mls
Drinking milk	150-200 mls	200-250 mls
Combination drinks (fruit juice/water, flavoured milk) (maximum portion size)	330 mls	330 mls

Top Tips

HOW TO INCREASE THE IRON, ZINC AND CALCIUM CONTENT OF YOUR MENU

Research shows that some children in Britain aren't getting enough iron, zinc and calcium in their diets to support their rapid growth. Here are some ways to boost their intake of these important minerals.

SOURCES OF IRON, ZINC AND CALCIUM IN EACH FOOD GROUP:

Starchy foods

IRON
Wholemeal bread
Fortified breakfast cereals

ZINC
Wholegrain and wheat germ breads
Plain popcorn

CALCIUM
Bread (except wholemeal)
Bread-based products

Fruit and Vegetables

IRON
Pulses e.g. chickpeas, lentils, beans (not green beans)
Dried apricots
Raisins

CALCIUM
Dried figs

Milk and dairy foods

ZINC
Cheese

CALCIUM
Milk
Yoghurt
Cheese
Milk-based desserts e.g. custard
Soya drinks enriched with calcium

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

IRON
Lean red meat e.g. beef, lamb
Soya beans,
Pulses e.g. chickpeas, lentils, beans (not green beans)

ZINC
Lean red meat e.g. beef, lamb, pork
Dark poultry meat
Oily fish e.g. canned sardines, pilchards, mackerel
Quorn™
Peanuts/ground nuts/almonds
Sesame seeds

CALCIUM
Canned sardines or pilchards, drained and mashed up with the bones
Tofu (soya bean)

MANAGING FOOD ALLERGIES AND INTOLERANCES

Food allergies or intolerances must be taken seriously. Schools and caterers should work closely with parents to support children with medically-verified allergies or intolerances.

The EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (1169/2011)[4] requires food businesses to provide allergy information for unpackaged foods from 13 December 2014. There are also changes to existing legislation on labelling allergenic ingredients in pre-packed foods. See **http://www.food.gov.uk/science/allergy-intolerance/label/labelling-changes/** for more information.

While it can sometimes feel daunting to cater for children with allergies or intolerances, it is important that these children can enjoy eating school food with their friends. There are a number of organisations who can provide practical help with this issue. Go to **http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/articles/category/16/catering-for-special-diets** for a comprehensive list of helpful organisations.

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/foodlabelling/proposed_legislation_en.htm

Standards for school food *other than lunch*

Fruit and Vegetables

Fruit and/or vegetables available in all school food outlets

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU CAN SERVE

Pots of sliced/chopped fresh fruit. Fruit kebabs. Vegetable sticks with dips. Salad shaker pots.

Starchy foods

Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week
(applies across the whole school day)

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU CAN SERVE

Potatoes, rice, pasta and bread (although these are restricted if cooked in fat or oil), malt loaf, or fruit bread.

Porridge is a great breakfast food. Use fruit to sweeten if necessary. Otherwise, choose fortified breakfast cereals with higher fibre and low or medium sugar content. Avoid cereals with lots of added sugar and salt.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once each week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools *(applies across the whole school day)*

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU CAN SERVE

Offer a variety of sandwich/wraps/muffin fillings or toast toppings, such as eggs, houmous, sliced meat, poultry, fish, canned fish, baked beans. Or serve tortillas, fajitas, burritos, quesadillas, enchiladas, omelette, Spanish omelette or frittata

Milk and dairy

Lower fat milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU CAN SERVE

Choose lower fat natural (plain) yoghurt and plain lower fat fromage frais, and add fruit to sweeten

Healthier drinks

applies across the whole school day

Free, fresh drinking water at all times

The only drinks permitted are:

- Plain water (still or carbonated)
- Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk
- Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls)
- Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks
- Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey)
- Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey
- Tea, coffee, hot chocolate

Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice

Many of the food-based standards apply to food served throughout the school day, including breakfast, mid-morning break and after school clubs, as well as from vending machines and tuck shops. We have produced a checklist (see page 16) for schools to ensure the food and drink provision in each outlet operating in the school is compliant with the food-based standards for food other than lunch, available to download at www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards

As with the previous standards, these do not apply at parties, celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions, or at fund-raising events.

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

- No more than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated, breadcrumb-coated, each week *(applies across the whole school day)*
- No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week *(applies across the whole school day)*
- No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat *(applies across the whole school day)*
- No savoury crackers or breadsticks
- No confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products *(applies across the whole school day)*
- No cakes, biscuits, pastries or desserts (except yoghurt or fruit-based desserts containing at least 50% fruit)
- Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked *(applies across the whole school day)*
- Any condiments limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful *(applies across the whole school day)*

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU CAN SERVE

Remember: foods high in fat, sugar and salt are restricted or not permitted at times other than lunch

Advice for preparing varied and tasty menus

1 HOW TO CREATE INTERESTING, VARIED AND HEALTHY MENUS

The School Food Plan has collected many examples of menus which meet the food-based standards and the nutrient framework – along with useful recipes created by caterers and cooks. You can access them by going to **www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards**

2 COOKING HEALTHIER FOOD

- Choose products that meet the Responsibility Deal salt targets: **https://responsibilitydeal.dh.gov.uk**
- Ask suppliers for nutritional information for their products, and read food labels to select those with lower amounts of fat, saturated fat, salt and sugars.
- Take action to limit the fat, sugar and salt content of recipes.
- Trim visible fat from meat, remove skin from poultry.
- Avoid frying or roasting. If you do, use spray oils.
- Skim fat from the surfaces of liquids.
- Roast or grill on a rack or trivet rather than cooking in a flat oven tray.
- Thicken soups and sauces with puréed vegetables or reductions, rather than adding extra flour and fat.
- Use lower fat vinaigrette or yoghurt dressings instead of mayonnaise.
- Don't add salt when boiling starchy foods or vegetables.
- Try halving the amount of sugar suggested in recipes. Or use fresh or dried fruit in dishes instead of sugar.

3 HOMEMADE FOOD

Consider making popular foods like burgers and sausages from scratch. Such 'homemade' offerings are usually healthier than the pre-made products sold by suppliers. Once you're cooking from scratch, why not branch out? The same mince used for a burger could make a meatloaf, meatballs or a ragout, to name but a few.

4 READING FOOD LABELS TO CHOOSE LOWER FAT, SATURATED FAT, SUGAR AND SALT PRODUCTS

When buying food, ask suppliers for nutritional information and choose those which are marked as 'low' or 'medium' in fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt (sodium). Portion sizes given on the product label may not be appropriate for children, so use the portion size checklist in this booklet.

FOOD LABELLING GUIDELINES FOR FAT, SATURATED FAT, SALT AND SUGAR PER 100G

(WHETHER OR NOT IT IS SOLD BY VOLUME)

NUTRIENT	WHAT IS LOW per 100g?	WHAT IS MEDIUM per 100g?	WHAT IS HIGH per 100g?	WHAT IS HIGH per portion?
Fat	3.0g or less	3.0 - 17.5g	More than 17.5g	More than 21.0g
Saturated Fat	1.5g or less	1.5 - 5.0g	More than 5.0g	More than 6.0g
Sugar	5.0g or less	5.0 - 22.5g	More than 22.5g	More than 27.0g
Salt	0.3g or less	0.3 - 1.5g	More than 1.5g	More than 1.8g
Criteria for drinks (per 100ml)				
Total Fat	1.5g or less	1.5 - 8.75g	More than 8.75g	More than 10.5g
Saturated fat	0.75g or less	0.75 - 2.5g	More than 2.5g	More than 3.0g
(Total) Sugars	2.5g or less	2.5 - 11.25g	More than 11.25g	More than 13.5g
Salt*	0.3g or less	0.3 - 0.75g	More than 0.75g	More than 0.9g

* Sodium from all sources expressed as salt (1g sodium = 2.2.g salt)

Good procurement and Government Buying Standards

There are a number of resources available to caterers and cooks to help them source their food responsibly.

GOVERNMENT BUYING STANDARDS

Government Buying Standards (GBS) set clear technical specifications to assist with buying food and catering services. **https://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/food/**
To support public procurement a toolkit has been developed to help buyers and suppliers understand and apply the GBS: **https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/food-buying-standards-for-the-public-sector-the-plan-toolkit**

FOOD FOR LIFE CATERING MARK

The Food for Life Catering Mark provides independent endorsement that food providers are meeting the school food standards and serving food prepared from fresh, sustainable and locally sourced ingredients: **www.sacert.org/catering**

FAIRTRADE

Buy Fairtrade products. See the national Fairtrade purchasing guide for caterers at: **www.fairtrade.org.uk/for_business/business_resources/stock_fairtrade_products.aspx**

ADVICE ON SEASONAL AND LOCAL FOOD

Buy seasonal and local food. As well as often being more sustainable in production, it can build greater awareness of local produce and build stronger links with local food suppliers. See: **http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/assets/rsrcs/british-seasonal-food-charts/cft_sfdchart_a1final.pdf**

Directories of local and regional food suppliers can be found at: **www.sustainweb.org/foodlegacy/local_and_sustainable_food_directories**

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Choose fish from verifiably sustainable sources and ideally Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified: **www.msc.org**
Also see: **www.fishonline.org**

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES OF SCHOOL FOOD PROCUREMENT

Children's Food Trust Quick guide to school food procurement: **www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/assets/rsrcs/quick-guides/CFTQGdProcV2_FINAL-web.pdf**

Food Delivery for Schools Programme. To find out more about the FDfS Programme: **www.pro5.org**

Reducing food waste can save money and time and be a great way to get pupils involved. For top tips, see: **www.recyclenow.com/recycle/recycle-schoolreducing-food-waste**

Where to go for more information and advice

The School Food Plan lays out 16 clear actions that support schools to transform their school food – both what children eat in school and how they learn about food. Go to **www.schoolfoodplan.com/www** to find examples of what other schools are doing to encourage children to eat well and to find details of many excellent organisations who are there to help.

RECIPES AND MENUS

Visit **www.schoolfoodplan.com/www** for a range of recipes and menus that meet the food-based standards and nutrient framework.

AWARD SCHEMES FOR SCHOOLS AND CATERERS

- The Children's Food Trust Excellence Award champions healthy eating for children's food. **www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/award**
- The Children's Food Trust Menu Checking Service checks school's menus against the revised standards. **www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/schools/the-standards/revised-standards/support/menu-checking**
- The Food for Life Partnership (FFLP) is an award scheme for schools which provides a framework to transform food culture through improving school food, meal take up and food education through a 'whole school approach'. **www.foodforlife.org.uk**

ALLERGIES AND SPECIAL DIETS

See **http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/articles/category/16/catering-for-special-diets** for a list of organisations who can help with allergies, cultural and special diets

DRINKS

For an updated list and definitions of drinks permitted in schools in England, see: **www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/revisedstandards**

HEALTHIER CATERING TOOLKITS

- Public Health England has published 'Healthier and more sustainable catering: a toolkit for serving food to adults'. **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthier-and-more-sustainable-catering-a-toolkit-for-serving-food-to-adults**
- Department for Health catering guidance for small businesses. **https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193106/130408-RD-Toolkit-Web-version.pdf**

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

The Department for Education sets the standards for school food and is responsible for the legislation. A link to the school food regulations can be found at: **www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards**

DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DEFRA)

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is responsible for Government Buying Standards (GBS). Defra has also developed a government initiative to encourage better public sector procurement of food and catering services. The Plan for Public Procurement encourages a healthy, engaged approach to food in schools as well as other parts of the public sector and provides a toolkit, which includes a balanced scorecard and an online portal, to assist buyers and sellers. The GBS for food and catering can be found at **http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/food/** and information about the procurement plan and toolkit at: **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-plan-for-public-procurement-food-and-catering**

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND

PHE is an executive agency of the Department of Health. Its mission is to protect and improve the nation's health and to address inequalities. Its social marketing campaign is Change4Life, which aims to help Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils understand the benefits of eating well and living a more active lifestyle from an early age: **www.nhs.uk/c4l/schools**

LACA

The Lead Association for CAtering in Education (LACA) is the lead membership organisation for the School Food sector. It has lots of information and advice on school food for members: **www.laca.co.uk**

CHILDREN'S FOOD TRUST

The Children's Food Trust is a national charity protecting every child's right to eat better and, so, to do better. The Trust provides tailored advice, training and practical support for all those involved in children's food: **www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk**

FOOD FOR LIFE PARTNERSHIP

The Food for Life Partnership (FFLP) is an award scheme for schools which provides a framework to transform food culture through improving school food, meal take up and food education through a 'whole school approach': **www.foodforlife.org.uk**

COMMUNITY DIETITIANS

Your community dietitian can be contacted through your local Public Health team or the British Dietetic Association: **www.bda.uk.com**

Checklist for *school lunches*

NAME OF SCHOOL:		DATE OF MENU:		
		Standard met (Y/N)		
Food group	**Food-based standards for school lunches**	**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Week 3**
STARCHY FOOD	One or more portions of food from this group every day			
	Three or more different starchy foods each week			
	One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food each week			
	Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week *(applies to food served across the whole school day)*			
	Bread - with no added fat or oil - must be available every day			
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES	One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day			
	One or more portions of fruit every day			
	A dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times each week			
	At least three different fruits, and three different vegetables each week			
MEAT, FISH, EGGS, BEANS AND OTHER NON-DAIRY SOURCES OF PROTEIN	A portion of food from this group every day			
	A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week			
	Oily fish once or more every three weeks			
	For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein three or more days a week			
	A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once a week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools, *(applies across the whole school day)*			
MILK AND DAIRY	A portion of food from this group every day			
	Lower fat milk and lactose reduced milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours			
FOODS HIGH IN FAT, SUGAR AND SALT	No more than two portions a week of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated *(applies across the whole school day)*			
	No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week *(applies across the whole school day)*			
	No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat *(applies across the whole school day)*			
	Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch with fruit or vegetables or dairy food			
	No confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products, *(applies across the whole school day)*			
	Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionery			
	Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked *(applies across the whole school day)*			
	Any condiments limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful. *(applies across the whole school day)*			
HEALTHIER DRINKS *applies across the whole school day*	Free, fresh drinking water at all times			
	The only drinks permitted are: • Plain water (still or carbonated) • Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk • Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls) • Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks • Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey) • Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey • Tea, coffee, hot chocolate Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice			

It is expected that schools will use these checklists in combination with the nutrition criteria of the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services.

Checklist for school food *other than lunch*

NAME OF SCHOOL/CATERER:	YES/NO
BREAKFAST (B)	
TUCK SHOP/MID-MORNING BREAK PROVISION (M)	
AFTER SCHOOL CLUB (A)	
VENDING MACHINE (V)	

Food group	Food-based standards for school food other than lunch	Standard met (Y/N)			
		B	M	A	V
STARCHY FOOD	Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week *(applies across the whole school day)*				
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES	Fruit and/or vegetables available in all school food outlets				
MEAT, FISH, EGGS, BEANS AND OTHER NON-DAIRY SOURCES OF PROTEIN	A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once each week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools *(applies across the whole school day)*				
MILK AND DAIRY	Lower fat milk and lactose reduced milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours				
FOODS HIGH IN FAT, SUGAR AND SALT	No more than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated, breadcrumb-coated, each week *(applies across the whole school day)*				
	No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week *(applies across the whole school day)*				
	No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat *(applies across the whole school day)*				
	No savoury crackers or breadsticks				
	No confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products *(applies to across the whole school day)*				
	No cakes, biscuits, pastries or desserts (except yoghurt or fruit-based desserts containing at least 50% fruit)				
	Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked *(applies across the whole school day)*				
	Any condiments limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful. *(applies across the whole school day)*				
HEALTHIER DRINKS *applies across the whole school day*	Free, fresh drinking water at all times				
	The only drinks permitted are: • Plain water (still or carbonated) • Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk • Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls) • Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks • Combinations of fruit juice or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey) • Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey • Tea, coffee, hot chocolate Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit jor vegetable uice				

It is expected that schools will use these checklists in combination with the nutrition criteria of the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services.