

**Glasgow City Council****Education, Skills, and Early Years City Policy Committee****Joint Report by Executive Director of Finance
and Executive Director of Education Services****Contact: Stephen Sawers - Head of Catering & FM****Contact: Lorna Goldie - Head of Resources, Education Services****CATERING & FM – NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF SCHOOL MEALS****Purpose of Report:**

To update the Education, Skills, and Early Years Policy Development Committee that the Council believes that the nutritional value of School Meals is equally important in supporting our young people to make healthier choices. This report outlines how the Council's school meal provision fulfils the requirements of the Food and Drink in Schools regulations. The current policy and practice across Glasgow schools ensures young people have access to a wide range of healthy, nutritious, and tasty meals.

Recommendations:

The Education, Skills and Early Years Policy Development Committee is asked to consider the report.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on current service delivery within the school catering service and associated processes for the provision of nutritional school meals.
- 1.2 In addition to the above, Catering and Facilities Management (CFM) have been working collaboratively with several external agencies on a range of service developments. This ensures compliance with the Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 and the Soil Association Scotland's Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) standards.

2. Background

- 2.1 Scottish Government published the report, Hungry for Success in 2003. This report emphasised the need for all school meals to conform to specific nutritional standards. The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act (2007) built on the work of Hungry for Success and the Health Promoting Schools initiative. The Act places health promotion at the heart of a school's activities. Two important documents relating to food within schools were also published. [Better Eating, Better Learning \(March 2014\)](#) sets out the commitment to ensure that Scotland's children and young people enjoy a healthier, thriving, sustainable and resilient food future. It states what education authorities, catering services, parents and schools working in partnership should do to improve school food and children and young people's learning about food. [Beyond the School Gate \(June 2014\)](#) is a report aimed at secondary schools. It asks local authorities, schools, caterers, and retailers to consider what more they can do to encourage young people to stay on site and purchase school food and how they can positively influence the food environment beyond the school gate. A discussion document [Becoming a Good Food Nation](#) was also published in 2014. This contains a vision on how Scotland would look in 2025 in relation to food. Its ambition being that people from every walk of life, will take pride and pleasure in the food served day by day in Scotland. To deliver this vision it proposes taking action in priority areas including food in the public sector; children's food; and local food. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-food-nation-programme-measures-2022-interim-update/documents/>
- 2.2 The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 introduced further changes to legislation which came into effect in April 2021. Part of the change being fruit and vegetable provision required to be increased ensuring that children are provided with fresh vegetables as part of their meal, there will be a minimum of two 40g portions at lunch and one 40g portion of fruit. It also states –
 - Fruit and vegetables must be provided at all other service points/times throughout the school day.

- Sugar content should be reduced in the content of food and drink, this has already been addressed by:
 - Removing flavoured milk, all fruit-based juices, and all additional sales.
 - Sweetened baked goods including desserts have been removed from primary menus to support the reduction of sugar. Dessert option is fresh fruit and yoghurt only.
- 2.3 Provision of red and processed meats has been reduced within primary and nursery locations. Red meat is provided three times over the week's menu cycle, one option includes a processed meat. Processed meats may include sausages, beef burgers etc. In Glasgow the food served to our young people meets with the FFLSH standards and as such all meat and poultry comply with animal welfare standards with less processed items on the menu.
- 2.4 In January 2015, funding for free school meals for all children in primary 1 to primary 3 in local authority schools across Scotland was put in place to help ensure every child has the best possible start in life. In February 2018, Glasgow City Council agreed to extend free school meals to all Primary 4 children with a further extension in January 2022 offering free school meals to all Primary 5 children.
- 2.5 The number of pupils registered for free school meals has risen sharply since March 2020 with the number growing from 25,899 to 27,804. This increase is consistent with the upward trend in applications for footwear and clothing grants.
- 2.6 The recent pandemic impacted on the take up of School Meals and our baseline position has been unstable throughout that period. However, since then, we are seeing a steady recovery and an increase of free school meals and we are using this new baseline to build momentum to ensure our offer is as attractive as possible.
- 2.7 Building on previous initiatives over several years we now have new menus in Primary, ASL schools and Early Years establishments (including Halal and Vegan menus). These were launched on Monday 17th April 2023 and has been designed in accordance with nutritional guidelines from Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/healthy-eating-schools-guidance-2020/pages/13/>
- 2.8 Over the last 24 months CFM have been working in partnership with the Soil Association Scotland's Food for Life team to ensure that the food we are providing is good for health, for the local economy wherever possible and for the environment. The team provide ongoing support, advice and guidance on a number of fronts to add capacity for us in our work around sustainability and service improvements. CFM successfully achieved the FFL Bronze level award in 2021 and with this external organisation undertaking annual inspections, it validates our work in making improvements in our new menus. <https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/schools/what-can-you-do/better-lunchtimes>

- 2.9 In addition to the activity with the Soil Association we took part in the “Eat them to defeat them” promotion which was a campaign that took place from February 2023 to March 2023. This involved TV advertising to promote healthy eating with particular focus on eating vegetables.
- 2.10 Breakfast clubs and Fuel Zones continue to promote fruit to all young people with all children given access to unlimited fruit.
- 2.11 Active marketing and promotion of the new menus is available locally and promoted via school websites and newsletters as well as being advertised on GCC website. Engaging training sessions delivered by the Food for Life team such as seasonal sorting exercises have taken place at various schools across the city. Increased twitter activity and presentations to Pupil Forums and Education Health and Well Being Co-coordinators have taken place providing valuable stakeholder insights for the support of future service development with feedback sessions to be established.
- 2.12 CFM are actively supporting the delivery of actions within the Glasgow City Food Plan. An example of this being the catering team’s participation within the Children and Young People’s subgroup. See included link to [Glasgow Food Plan](#)

3. School Meal Provision Fulfils the Requirements of the Food and Drink in Schools Regulations

- 3.1 All components of The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 were carefully scrutinized as a starting point for the design of new menu utilising the template for recording information which supports the approach undertaken to implement and meet the requirements of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007.
- 3.2 Food working groups are established involving representatives from Catering Managers, Assistant Area Operations Managers, Area Operations Managers Glasgow Cook Freeze, Project Team, Food Safety and procurement/Suppliers, and Senior Management. Each on-site catering team liaises directly with pupils to identify popular choices and gain insight for refreshing the menus.
- 3.3 Due to our scale, Glasgow can directly influence the research and development of products, working directly with our suppliers to reformulate and introduce compliant products or ingredients for our menu.
- 3.4 Before introducing new products or ingredients, the following processes are undertaken:
- ensure that all accreditations such as Red Tractor, Farm Assured, Free Range, MSC and Halal are in place.
 - nutritionally analysis of all products and ingredients to ensure prescribed nutrient targets are met.

- 3.5 Recipe development involves project team, Cook Freeze and Nutritional advisor. All new recipes must be fully compliant. All Food for Life Bronze Level standards are in place.
- 3.6 Compliant products are produced in a small scale allowing for testing to be completed at selected schools by pupils. The Pupils provide feedback on taste, appearance, texture, and personal preference. The feedback is considered, and products revised if required. This process can result in a product being discounted.
- 3.7 Once all of the processes have been completed, an annual 3-week menu is compiled and nutritionally analysed. The current requirement is to meet daily and weekly targets. The daily targets focus on energy and its sources, and the weekly targets ensure all nutrient standards are met.

4. The current policy and practice across Glasgow is to ensure young people have access to a wide range of healthy, nutritious, tasty and filling meals.

4.1 CFM will deliver the annual new menu project working in close collaboration with Education Services and other key stakeholders.

4.2 The group have established a list of workstreams listed below –

- Menus
- Marketing & Promotion
- Procurement
- People Engagement & Resources
- Internal Communication

These workstreams will work concurrently with appropriate prioritisation to meet the phased implementation timescale.

4.3 Menus are reviewed and developed on an annual basis with an emphasis to strictly comply with Scottish Government guidelines to include medical, cultural, ethical, and moral diets. CFM will work in collaboration with The Soil Association to explore and identify quality sustainable compliant food offerings to support the Bronze Award accreditation. The range of options is directly influenced by pupils ensuring access to popular healthy choices The on-site catering teams encourage the uptake of soup, fruit, and vegetables.

4.4 To further enhance the marketing and promotion of school meals, the working group are utilising social media channels (Twitter) and close collaboration with schools to publish and promote menus within their chosen platform. Menus are available within the Fuel Zone area of GCC website. Photographs of all food

options are available within ParentPay to assist pupil/parent preselection. New menu release dates and theme days such as the Coronation and Christmas lunches are promoted via the ParentPay Portal for parent/carer information purposes.

- 4.5 GCC's procurement team liaise directly with suppliers to reinforce the importance of community benefit element of the tender process. The community benefits could include support for pupil based healthy choice activities such as free fruit and vegetable for sorting exercises or supplier presentations such as "where does milk come from". All community benefit activities are monitored to ensure commitments are met.
- 4.6 CFM will continue to engage with key stakeholders with particular emphasis on parents and pupils. We have recently engaged with Parent and Pupil Councils and delivered a webinar presentation to Glasgow City Parents Group on 27th April, 2023.

Pupil interaction has also taken place with over 400 pupils receiving a presentation from our Operations Support team on how we design our new menu. We value the feedback from these sessions which is then used to plan menus and enhance the school meal experience.

- 4.7 Internal Communication is cascaded over a 6-month period prior to commencement of new menu. This includes:
 - Sharing feedback on current menu record.
 - Provide feedback from pupil liaison meetings on current and new menu items.
 - Proposed new menu offering.
 - Provision of information pack regarding all elements of new menu.

All the information detailed above is to ensure access to a variety of fresh, well presented menu items to support healthy food choices for pupils and ensure consistency of approach and a shared understanding in service delivery.

5. Collaborative working

- 5.1 CFM are members of the ASSIST FM association. The association help promote and improve service delivery to public sector organisations throughout Scotland and provide support to those officers involved in delivery of services. Involvement in this group provides Glasgow with networking opportunities to further enhance our future service delivery model.
- 5.2 In collaboration with partners across the network and supply chain ASSIST FM continue to campaign ahead of the roll out of Universal School Meals to highlight the importance of serving good food to our young people with the emphasis on such food being regarded as an investment as opposed to a cost.

- 5.3 ASSIST FM will also be an enabler in the work and preparation for the Good Food Nation Bill which was recently passed by Scottish Government. CFM will play a lead role in developing the Councils plan which will be reviewed every 5 years and reported on every 2 years. This plan is expected one year after the the national plan is developed and released in Autumn 2023.
- 5.4 Glasgow City Council have also produced a recent [blog](#) for the ASSIST FM website which highlights the good practice model in place across the city,
- 5.5 CFM have planned engagement sessions with the following neighbouring local authorities to share best practice in both normal service delivery and specifically in the roll out of universal free school meals –
- East Dunbartonshire
 - Renfrewshire
 - East Renfrewshire
 - South Lanarkshire
 - Edinburgh
 - Argyle and Bute

6. Summary

- 6.1 The service continues to build the relationship with Soil Association Scotland and this partnership working has delivered significant benefits to CFM along with additional resources that are available as part of the programme. This has supplemented our staff training, menu and recipe development etc. In October 2022, CFM and Soil Association Scotland were successful at the Scottish School Food Awards and were awarded The Healthy Living Innovation Award.
- 6.2 This provides the evidence that the objective of providing nutritional value of School Meals to our young people is being met.

7. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Extension of the provision of free meals in primary will be subject to funding from Scottish Government.

Legal: None.

Personnel: Recruitment of catering and support for learning staff to support increased eligibility and uptake will be required.

Procurement: Expansion of existing suppliers.

Council Strategic Plan

A Healthier City.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

Yes.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Positive Impact.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

The expansion of FSMs will align with the Council's Healthier City Strategy.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Waste reduction, production efficiencies reduced paperwork.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report Y/N

Data sharing agreements between Glasgow City Council and relevant 3rd parties are in place and user consents are included in the on-line payments registration process.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Education, Skills and Early Years Policy Development Committee is asked to consider the report.