



ANNEX: AREAS FOR ACTION ON SECONDARY SCHOOL FOOD

ACTION AREA	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS FROM PARTICIPANT DATA
CATERING AND PROCUREMENT		
1. Catering staff investment, training, and skills	Investment in catering staff and their training; recognition of school catering as a career to enable better recruitment and retention of staff and provision of high-quality school food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide investment and skills development to boost recruitment of catering staff • Improving caterers' knowledge on compliance with the school food standards • Greater promotion of catering as a career • Demonstrating and sharing good practice • Bring professional chefs into school to share skills and inspire kitchen staff
2. Integration and valuing of catering teams within schools	Catering teams integrated, respected, and valued in schools, with involvement in food education and collaboration with school Senior Leadership Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better links between catering teams and school senior leadership; value school chefs • Opportunities for catering teams to interact with students, parents and school staff • Integrate food education into canteen offer; caterers to provide cooking clubs
3. Investment in catering facilities and equipment	Investment in school kitchens, facilities and equipment to enable high quality food to be efficiently prepared in sufficient quantities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase preparation / kitchen space and modernise equipment • Adequate food storage to reduce waste
4. Support schools in the procurement of school food	Training and support on school food procurement, including negotiating catering contracts and implementing in-house catering provision models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater investment in school senior leadership training on food procurement • Support local economies through sustainably sourced school food • LACA (umbrella school caterers organisation) to promote healthy foods and suppliers
5. Reform school food catering provider models	Reform school catering arrangements to ensure equitable and sustainable provision of high-quality food nationally, removing the focus on profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvest profit into school food provision • A baseline quality standard of catering provision (e.g. within contracts) • A system run in the public interest to facilitate healthier, equitable and sustainable provision • Mandatory government buying standards for food incorporating healthy food procurement
6. Adapt the food offer to increase quality and meet students' needs	Adapt food provision to incorporate healthier and more sustainable foods, increase choice and cultural diversity, and meet students' needs and preferences relating to attractiveness, value for money and hygiene of foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of attractive meals, meeting students' needs around school food e.g. portion sizes, food hygiene, quality, flavour, visual appeal, value for money, dietary requirements • Adapt food offer to school population; incorporate greater cultural diversity • Reduce availability of processed foods; wider choice of healthier foods (including healthy 'grab and go' options); default offer of vegetables • Greater focus on sustainably sourced food
7. Changing food service arrangements to promote healthy food uptake	Design food service arrangements to minimise queuing, allow flexible payment and dining, and incorporate attractive and varied outlet types which prompt healthy and nutritious choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More space, equipment and serving stations; flexible and faster payment systems to reduce queues; staggered lunchtimes • Attractive outlet types to mimic the wider food environment • Food position to make healthy choices easier; better marketing and labelling of healthy food • Improve access to clean, functioning water fountains; provide water as the default drink • System of pre-ordering to allow preparation of high-quality food • Lunchtime activities to encourage students to use school canteen
8. Reform breaktime offer	Reform the breaktime offer so that students do not have breaktime food instead of lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide healthy substantial snacks and widen gap between break and lunch time • More variety of healthy snack items



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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE		
9. School food policies, restrictions, and regulations	Dedicated policies and rules in schools designed to encourage healthy eating and restrict consumption of unhealthy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules and monitoring of foods/drinks brought into school, e.g. packed lunch policy • Student/parent/staff pledge to sign up to healthy eating • Whole school food policy and community engagement; have a food champion • Off-site policy-students stay in school at lunch
10. Support for Senior Leadership Teams and governors on school food	Training and support for secondary school Senior Leadership Teams and governors on school food and school food standards compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for Senior Leadership Teams and governors on the school food standards, and to support understanding of their role in school food and healthy eating • Support / templates for developing school food policy and actions on school food • Put metrics in place to evaluate the impact of actions on school food
11. Local Authority support for all schools	Local Authority to provide support to all schools through specialist school food teams and public health teams, sharing best practice and targeting schools most in need of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated roles in Local Authorities to support school food • Targeted school support for implementation of national school food policy • Incorporate more metrics to monitor the correlation of school food with student outcomes; recognise well-performing schools; share best practice • Monitoring of free school meal uptake and support schools with low uptake
12. National government to provide joined-up leadership on school food	National government to work together, champion school food, and develop a national strategy and programme to improve school food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer direction and leadership from government regarding the school food standards and food education; a national strategy and lead on food education • Develop clear best practice guidelines for schools; specific guidance for secondary schools • Introduce a DfE-audited continual cycle of school food improvement • More cohesion across government departments on school food
13. Adapt and update school food standards	Adapt school food standards and update to address processed foods and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate greater restriction of processed foods; consider sustainability • Include young people in design of school food standards • Make school food standards more practical to implement within limited budgets • Allow for some flexibility for caterers
14. Monitoring of school food standards compliance	Local and/or national systems for monitoring compliance with the school food standards, driving continuous improvement across all schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring / inspection of school food standards; set targets for improvement • Implement a robust framework supported by sufficient resource for schools / caterers • Governors / senior leadership to be involved in monitoring and reporting of compliance • Ensure compliance assessment is based on the full school day offer
15. Increase the role of Ofsted in monitoring school food	An explicit role of Ofsted in school food monitoring, including monitoring of school food standards compliance and the eating experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted to monitor compliance with school food standards, food quality and eating experience, and acknowledge healthy schools accreditation • Ofsted to give greater consideration to food education in inspections • Ofsted national lead for school food; inspectors to have appropriate skills/competence



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FOOD ENVIRONMENTS BEYOND SCHOOL		
16. Education and guidance for parents / families	Provide educational opportunities, guidance and resources for parents on preparing and providing healthy food for children and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, guidance, and resources for parents / families on cooking • Educational and practical food preparation skills workshops for parents / families
17. Address the wider food environment	Local Authorities/ government / communities to address the local food environment surrounding schools and the wider food system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link school food with Public Health / other Local Authority departments to address the wider food environment (advertising, planning); whole systems approach to the food environment • Scheme for voluntary sign up of food outlets to provide healthy options around schools • Protect school food supply chains; use school food to improve local food economies; engage communities
THE FOOD SPACE AND EXPERIENCE WITHIN SCHOOLS		
18. Provide longer lunch breaks and protect time to eat	Extend lunch breaks and have dedicated time to enable students enough time to choose and consume healthier food options, and have social time together when eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer lunch breaks to provide more opportunity for catering staff-student interaction • Greater valuing and protection of mealtimes as social eating opportunities • Support for schools to implement longer lunch breaks; external monitoring of length of school lunch
19. Dedicated, appealing and sociable eating spaces	Provide dedicated dining spaces that are clean, spacious and appealing to students, and that are designed to encourage social opportunities to sit and eat with friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a variety of calm, attractive, clean and spacious dining areas to encourage sociable eating; opportunities for students and staff to eat together • Allowing students with packed lunches and school dinners to eat together • Student-centred design in the dining room • National funding to improve school dining spaces
PRIORITY OF FOOD WITHIN SCHOOLS		
20. Support healthy schools accreditation in secondary schools	Provide funding and support for schools and school communities to engage with accreditation schemes relating to healthy food, aiming for all schools to achieve accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and support for schools to achieve accreditation; link with training and support for leaders and staff • Adapt accreditation schemes to better suit secondary schools • Require schools to join accreditation schemes; acknowledge accreditation in external inspection
21. Redesign food lessons and increase emphasis within the curriculum	Design and deliver inspiring, practical food education across all year groups which aims to develop life skills and food literacy, ensuring equitable access to all students by providing ingredients without cost and sufficient facilities within schools; provide routes to further qualifications and careers in food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory food technology across all year groups; reinstate Food A-Level • More (ring-fenced) funding for improved food education teaching facilities • Free ingredients to improve access to food education for all and reduce stigma • Interactive, creative, and practical teaching; affordable, quick, and healthy recipes • Develop food literacy as a competency, with more purposeful life skills development • More opportunities for learning about food growing in secondary schools • Redesign the food curriculum with a route to providing vocational qualifications



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PRIORITY OF FOOD WITHIN SCHOOLS		
22. Consistent food and nutrition messaging and cross-curricular education	Integrate teaching on food and healthy eating across the curriculum and beyond, ensuring messages are consistent, and linking to wider health determinants and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate education on nutrition and healthy eating across curriculum and in non-curricular activities; ensure consistent messaging on healthy eating across school • Improve teaching on wider health/wellbeing outcomes related to diet • Teaching on how food systems impact on their food choices • School cookery clubs and field trips on food; celebrations less focused on sweet foods
23. Invest in educators to deliver food and healthy eating education	Invest in more food education specialists, teachers, and technicians, and provide teaching and resources for food education to all school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More investment in specialist food teachers and food technicians • Specialist Post Graduate Certificate in Education qualification in food • Professional development courses and teaching resources to support the delivery food teaching in schools and a whole school approach to food
24. Increase student involvement on school food	Provide a range of opportunities for engagement with students on school food, ensuring meaningful feedback mechanisms are in place and involving them in innovative ways, including engagement with caterers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting opportunities for students to feed into menus, policies and school food provision • Provide anonymous feedback mechanisms • Opportunities for students to taste new dishes • Encourage good relationships between students and catering staff • Involve young people in designing and implementing school food policies • Involve teachers as role models
25. Increase family / parental engagement on school food	Increase information for parents on school food and provide meaningful opportunities for parents to engage with schools on school food provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication with parents about menus and prices, and provide opportunities to experience school food and feedback • Framework for interaction between caterers, parents, families, students, teachers, and schools; empowering parents to advocate for change in school food
FUNDING FOR SCHOOL FOOD		
26. Review / increase / ring-fence funding for school food provision	Protect school food budgets, review and reform the Free School Meals programme and funding, and introduce further schemes to reduce food insecurity in students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widen eligibility for or provide universal free school meals (FSM) to address food quality, hunger, attainment inequalities and stigma • Transparent FSM funding allocation; increase free school meals allowance • Remove barriers to FSM registration e.g. auto-enrolment; raise parental awareness • Ring-fence spending on school food; consistent cost of school meal across schools / caterers • More substantial breakfast offer; universal / targeted free breakfast offer • Extend free fruit and vegetable scheme to secondary school students and provide other healthy food subsidies • Provide further statutory guidance to schools on how debts related to school food should be dealt with, to ensure that students have access to school lunches • Increase school role in supporting family food security