

Hungry for Success – Next Steps

Seminar Report

October / November 2005

Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit (SHPSU), in partnership with
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and
the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED)



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

1. Introduction

Background

In February 2003 the Scottish Executive announced acceptance of the recommendations made by the Expert Panel on School Meals in their report *Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland*. Ministers committed to improving the provision of school meals by supporting ‘partnerships between children/young people, school, family and the community in offering access to attractively presented food of an appropriate nutrient composition within schools, and in developing a wider understanding of food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles which can inform children's choices and eating habits within and outwith school and throughout life’.

Policy context

Action to improve school meals and introduce standards of nutrition is part of the Scottish Executive's response to *Improving Health in Scotland: The Challenge* (Scottish Executive, 2003). In this report, diet is a key theme and there is an emphasis on children and young people; early years and teenage transition are identified as priority areas for action. *The Challenge* sets out a vision of ‘well nourished, well balanced healthy children who are well prepared to benefit from education’.

Councils have been encouraged to implement the recommendations from *Hungry for Success* within the context of Health Promoting Schools, ensuring not only that health education and promotion are integral to the curriculum, but also that the school ethos, policies, services and extra curricular activities foster mental, physical and social well-being and healthy development.

More recently, with the emergence of *ambitious, excellent schools* (Scottish Executive, 2005) work is underway to embed health promotion into the core business of schools. This work incorporates activity in support of the implementation of *Hungry for Success*.

This report is for delegates who took part in the *Hungry for Success – Next Steps* seminars across Scotland. It aims both to inform and to share the best practice sessions with attendees. It may also prove useful for those who work to implement *Hungry for Success* policy but were unable to attend. The report gives an overview of each seminar, provides details of the keynote speeches, summarises the workshops and looks at the future steps for *Hungry for Success*.

Three regional *Hungry for Success – Next Steps* seminars were held, as follows, during 2005: in Inverness on Monday, 31 October; in Edinburgh on Thursday, 3 November; in Glasgow on Monday, 7 November.

The aims of the seminars were as follows:

- to support the implementation of *Hungry for Success* by bringing together a wide range of partners
- to provide a forum for sharing good practice
- to use the lessons learned through the primary sector's preparation for implementation to direct the secondary sector
- to support authorities in sharing this learning as they approach the December 2006 deadline for implementing the recommendations of *Hungry for Success* in secondary schools.

The day was structured so that the keynote speakers gave presentations on selected issues and then opened the floor to the delegates for questions and comments.

Delegates included representatives from councils and NHS boards, teachers and headteachers, school catering staff and health workers, representatives from school boards or parent forums, the voluntary sector, secondary school senior pupils and local council members. As the day evolved, delegates split into workshops to consider the issues raised in terms of consultation, promotion, effective partnerships and planning for the future. Groups collated their observations and conclusions, which were recorded and collected and are summarised within this report.

Executive summary

There is a shared vision and commitment for working towards a healthier, more prosperous Scotland in which inequalities are reduced. The need is acknowledged for a full engagement across all Scottish life, with leadership that instils the vision and confidence to change. *Hungry for Success*, an educated choice model, is at the forefront of this vision and is the cornerstone programme that will help to improve health and maximise the potential of Scotland's children.

Partnership has been the key so far in encouraging young people to make healthier food choices. There have been many examples of success and great progress achieved. However, there are challenges ahead. Ongoing funding from the Scottish Executive will continue to support the aims of *Hungry for Success*, finance further work in food education, promote the uptake of school meals and boost the uptake of milk, water and fruit across schools.

The whole school approach to health improvement favoured by *Hungry for Success* and Health Promoting Schools is about the environment in which young people eat, socialise and learn. There is still work to be done in terms of maintaining standards, engaging with partners (including parents and the wider community) and allocating future funding. Nevertheless, there has been substantial progress to date. In October 2005, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a progress report, *Monitoring of the Implementation of Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland*. This report endorses the fact that HMIE will continue to inspect the implementation of *Hungry for Success* in primary and special schools, has plans to pilot secondary inspections in early 2006 and is developing benchmarks for schools and councils to use as a self-evaluation guide.

Six councils (Moray, Highland, Fife, West Lothian, East Ayrshire and East Renfrewshire) provided various examples of good practice in their areas. Four workshops (on consultation, promotion, effective partnerships and planning for the future) allowed delegates not only to address current problems but also to suggest possible solutions that would be in keeping with the ethos of *Hungry for Success*.

2. A National Overview

Presentations by: **Gillian Kynoch**, Food and Health Coordinator, Scottish Executive Health Department; Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) **Chris McIlroy**, HMIE; **Robert Brown MSP**, Deputy Minister for Education and Young People

Gillian Kynoch, Food and Health Coordinator, Scottish Executive Health Department

'If Scotland is to be the best small country in the world, we must improve the health of all people, especially the poorest members of society.'

The health of people in Scotland is fundamental to the happiness and prosperity not only of individuals but also of the families and communities of Scotland. The Scottish Executive sees *Hungry for Success* as the cornerstone programme in improving the health and maximising the potential of all of Scotland's children.

Presenting the national overview to those attending the *Hungry for Success – Next Steps* seminars, Gillian Kynoch talked of a shared vision and commitment for a healthier, more prosperous Scotland in which inequalities are reduced. She also stressed the need for a full engagement, across all Scottish life, with leadership that instils the vision and confidence to change; *Hungry for Success* is at the forefront of that engagement. Together, *Hungry for Success*, Active Schools and Health Promoting Schools are all bringing real change. Since 2002, the will and passion of all involved has made significant progress in bringing about this change – and, with it, real challenges too.

Partnership has been the key to the achievements of *Hungry for Success* so far. Meeting the challenges ahead will be possible because *Hungry for Success* is about commitment shared between national and local government, between education and the catering services, between schools, parents and pupils. Real benefit is being accrued from the new partnerships and this includes better working between teachers and pupils, schools and parents, National Health Service (NHS) colleagues and local authority officers, and the Scottish Executive and HMIE. Furthermore, local authority catering associations and the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), procurement officers and the Food Standards Agency, food manufacturers and suppliers are also working together to source food products both locally and nationally.

Hungry for Success needs to be fully realised, not least for the benefit of children in disadvantaged communities. For these children, the school dinner provides a significant proportion of their whole diet and underpins their potential to achieve and learn. Examples of good work in Scotland include the free fruit initiative for all children in P1 and P2 (well received by pupils, staff and parents) and the availability of drinking water in most schools. Menu changes, introduced gradually in consultation with pupils and staff, have helped bring about increased uptake of and a greater interest in healthy food among young people.

Turning to the secondary schools, Gillian Kynoch talked about the challenges ahead. There is still a long way to go and everyone will have to work hard to ensure that all schools meet the standards, targets and aspirations of *Hungry for Success*. There are greater temptations at this age to eat less healthy food and it is difficult to persuade older children to try the new and unfamiliar. Teaching pupils to make healthier choices across the board, whether in eating, exercising or choosing their friends, is vital. *Hungry for Success* is not just about the food on the plate: it is about making sure Scotland's schools provide an environment that helps children understand how to make choices and decisions, and how to take care of their own

health throughout their lives. That is why it plays such a crucial part in the wider Health Promoting Schools approach and in the broader education agenda in Scotland.

Gillian Kynoch went on to talk about the Scottish Executive's financial investment in *Hungry for Success*. Over the past three years, £63.5 million has been allocated to the first phase, and the First Minister recently announced ongoing funding of more than £70 million for the next three years. This funding will support the broad aims of *Hungry for Success*: it will also support further work in food education – in promoting the uptake of school meals and in boosting the uptake of low-fat milk, water and fruit in schools.

There will also be consultation on legislative proposals that will affect the provision of food in schools. Next year, all stakeholders will be approached for their views. The proposals may include putting the nutritional standards for *Hungry for Success* into statute, and examining the best ways to promote the uptake of school meals. All stakeholders will be fully engaged with the process on a national level. For examples of good practice, however, she urged delegates to look beyond Scotland, to the international movement of countries aiming to improve the diet and well-being of their citizens. *Hungry for Success* is part of that movement.

In England the School Meals Review Panel recently published its results on English school meals, and many of the recommendations mirror those of *Hungry for Success*. The successful practices already enjoyed in Scotland have been shared with English colleagues and, in turn, what they have learned about their own process has informed the direction and progress in Scotland. In Wales, colleagues are progressing well with work around school meals, especially in terms of breakfast clubs and in the area of local and sustainable procurement. Further afield, there is substantial progress in California and Australia. In France, a new Public Health Act will control both the provision of food to children and advertising.

HMCI Chris McIlroy, HMIE

Chris McIlroy began by talking about the need to view *Hungry for Success* within the broader context of the Health Promoting School and the health promoting society. With regard to the health promoting society, he addressed the following themes: health and activity, emotional and mental health, health and diet, risks to health. He highlighted the need for health promotion, comparing our health record in Scotland with that of other countries in relation to issues such as the incidence of heart disease and obesity.

The work of health services must also be considered in terms of their impact on the individual in the interrelated areas of physical activity, emotional and mental well-being, diet, and the way that individuals respond to risk. He gave the example of the relationship between diet and emotional health. In the short term, comfort food may be consumed when people are tired or feel depressed; in the long term, low self-esteem can be linked with anorexia. In the health promoting society, if we are to promote health and tackle health issues, we have to address all these interrelated strands. *Hungry for Success* has to be part, therefore, of a holistic approach to health promotion.

A variety of social and economic pressures play a part in influencing attitudes and trends. Chris McIlroy illustrated the influence of the media with a series of headlines and captions from newspapers; these linked plentiful – sometimes excessive – drinking and eating with happiness. Society, through the media, communicates conflicting messages about healthy living. On one hand, young people are told that it is important to eat healthily, to be fit and attractive. On the other, they are sometimes encouraged to over-indulge. Schools, and society in general, have to be aware of those mixed messages. In terms of economic factors, the relationship between health and poverty is important. Statistics show large differences in life

expectancy related to differences in the affluence and health of adjacent neighbourhoods. The pressures of poverty have implications for diet, lifestyle and long-term health, and this raises issues about the allocation of resources.

Schools promote health through the curriculum. Pupils learn about making informed lifestyle choices through the ethos of the school, which has strong and subtle influences on health promotion. A school's ethos is promoted, for example, through staff role models – and pupils quickly detect whether staff 'practise what they preach'. It is also promoted through the way that healthy activities are organised, through tuck shops, and through involving pupils in discussions and decision-making on health-related issues. The partnership approach involving all appropriate agencies is very important and, since home is one of the strongest influences in pupils' lives, parents must be included in the health promotion agenda.

While the HMIE Progress Report on *Hungry for Success* brings the good news that 'in most schools, young people are getting more healthy options and are becoming increasingly confident in choosing their options', there is no room for complacency. There is evidence of good work and good practice, but there has to be ongoing improvement.

Looking to the developing health agenda, Chris McIlroy noted increasing provision – such as lunch clubs in holiday periods, breakfast clubs, and extensions of the free fruit initiative. One strand of the debate continues to be 'educated choice' versus 'restriction'. *Hungry for Success* is an educated choice model. However, there are elements where restrictions are used – as in the case of fizzy drinks, which the Scottish Executive may eventually ban in its offices and schools. Educated choice (giving people information, the right to choose and then educating that choice as far as possible) is likely to have long-term benefits. However, some argue that the emphasis should be on giving pupils a good diet at school without worrying about choice. Evaluation is important in informing such debates.

With regard to inspection, the next step is to include secondary schools in inspections. Consideration has also been given to inspecting pre-school settings, where children form early habits and establish preferences in their diets, and where there is a high level of partnership with parents. Here, Chris McIlroy talked about looking closely at what pupils actually 'take out' of the provision of meals over an extended period. He concluded by saying that HMIE does not make policy but provides evidence as a basis for informed political and policy decisions – through feeding back evidence on how things are going.

Robert Brown MSP, Deputy Minister for Education and Young People

Robert Brown began by looking back three years to the Expert Panel on School Meals report on the school meals service in Scotland, which led to Scottish ministers committing to funding a programme of improvements through *Hungry for Success*. Commending the efforts of all involved, he quoted from the HMIE's interim report which found that 'good progress overall is being made to implement the recommendations to improve school meals and other aspects of food in schools'. He commented that this was good news in a country where almost 54 per cent of 15-year-old boys drink at least one fizzy drink every day, and over 48 per cent of 13-year-old girls eat sweets every single day. Against that backdrop, he cited examples of good practice in schools, such as healthy tuck shops and vending initiatives, better food served in school dining rooms, pupils in P1 and P2 receiving free fruit, and drinking water being freely available in most Scottish schools.

He then talked about the shared aims and partnership working that he believes will bring about real change for Scotland's children. These partnerships are between national and local government, between education and catering service delivery, and between schools, pupils and parents. He agreed with his fellow speakers that there is still room for improvement.

There is a long way to go before Scotland's young people fully learn to make healthy choices about what they eat, how much exercise they take and how to look after their own health.

Moving on to Scotland's unfortunate reputation in terms of the health of its people, Robert Brown alluded to the high levels of lifestyle-related health problems. He talked about educating young people not only in terms of the quality of food served in school dining rooms but also in terms of providing an environment that helps them understand how to look after their health throughout their lives. He emphasised the Scottish Executive's commitment to helping young people to realise their potential, and noted that *Hungry for Success* has a vital part to play in delivering this, especially in disadvantaged communities where school meals provide a significant proportion of a child's food intake.

He then talked about the ongoing funding for *Hungry for Success*. In addition to supporting the key priorities of this initiative, he hopes to see further work on promoting children's understanding of healthy eating, increasing uptake of school meals and boosting uptake of free fruit, milk and drinking water. He said that in 2006 the Scottish Executive will be consulting on a range of options, including legislation, to take forward *Hungry for Success* – sharing good practice from Scotland as well as lessons learned from the rest of the UK and other countries.

3. *Hungry for Success* and Health Promoting Schools

Presentation by **Lindsay Graham**, National Development Officer, Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit

Setting the scene for her address, Lindsay Graham looked at the wider perspective, examining current initiatives in California. In September 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill banning all junk food and soda from schools in California. With one in three school age children overweight, 40 per cent unfit and obesity affecting 15 per cent of children aged between six and 19 years, California suffers from health inequality issues similar to those experienced in Scotland. In 2005, those issues cost California around \$28 billion. It proposes an investment of \$18 million for more fresh fruit and vegetables in school meals. Comparing Scotland and the state of California puts into perspective the Scottish Executive's commitment of a further £70 million allocated to Health Promoting Schools and *Hungry for Success* over the next three years.

There are examples of good practice in California. Every day, around 200 pupils, mainly from low income/ethnic minority families, attend a school breakfast club near San Francisco. A 'nutrition centre' in the West Contra district serves 33,000 pre-cooked individual meals a week and ships them out to schools for heating on site. California, like Scotland, has fast food vans: the 'Rollin Café', which costs \$77,000 to run, serves schools with no kitchen facilities, distributing 400 pre-prepared meals, fresh sandwiches and drinks. Fife Council's Body Fuel vans are similar, but meet *Hungry for Success* nutritional standards. State-/trust-funded after-school activities in California promote self-esteem and confidence and are well supported by teaching staff and volunteers.

In Scotland, the whole school approach favoured by Health Promoting Schools and *Hungry for Success* is not only about food; it is also about the surroundings where young people eat, socialise and learn, about role models and peer motivation, and about what is taught through the curriculum and in community based activities. A national policy surrounds Health Promoting Schools and *Hungry for Success*, and three national programmes (Eating for Health, Physical Activity and the National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Well-being) fit into a whole school approach to health improvement.

Through Eating for Health, *Hungry for Success* has been implemented across primary schools in Scotland and will be executed in secondary schools in 2006. *Hungry for Success* mirrors the Health Promoting Schools approach and the partnership working at strategic and operational levels. These national programmes are beginning to influence positive lifestyle changes in Scotland's children and young people. Lindsay Graham spoke about research showing that effective health promoting programmes in schools must be holistic, multi-faceted, participative and sustainable. *Hungry for Success* identifies four key elements for health promotion: supportive relationships; strong participation of pupils/staff; encouragement of autonomy; clarity of rules, boundaries and expectations. Partnerships involving parents through consultation, catering and health staff, young people and the wider community can be successful.

There is still work to be done in terms of maintaining standards, engaging with partners like local providers/retailers, parents and the wider community, and in relation to future funding and how it will be allocated to best support the *Hungry for Success* second phase. Accessing appropriate training can be a challenge. So too can making the links with physical activity and mental health and well-being as part of the wider Health Promoting Schools approach or with what is taught in the curriculum. *Hungry for Success* is about schools, families and communities connecting, about improving school meal provision, about continuing food education in informal settings and about using education to influence the nutritional content

of snacks, packed lunches and family diets. It is about discussing food in School Nutrition Action Groups (SNAGs) or Health Promoting Schools groups and linking with Eco Schools, Food for Life or enterprise projects; it is about local producers and providers working with schools to raise awareness concerning food and its value.

Partnerships between councils and the NHS around Scotland are working to put policy into practice. *Hungry for Success* coordinators are in post or being recruited. Health Promoting Schools and *Hungry for Success* networks are already formed or being formed currently, and school support training is evolving at local and national level. Best practice is being shared in local authority and NHS networks. Resources have been developed. One such resource is the training pack *Growing through Adolescence* (Health Scotland, 2005), which exemplifies support for the whole school approach. Research will continue to inform the future whole school approach to Eating for Health, and HMIE is monitoring progress. In the year ahead, existing networks will be strengthened, and a Strategic Reference Group has been formed with a range of partners.

4. *Hungry for Success* – Progress to Date

Presentations by Claire Alison and Laura Nicol, Nutrition Associate Assessors, HMIE
(Laura Nicol presented the findings of HMIE's progress report: *Monitoring of the Implementation of Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland*, published in October 2005, at all three seminars)

Between September 2004 and June 2005, 39 schools (33 primary schools and six special schools) were inspected, in 27 different local authority areas. Most councils were visited by a Nutrition Associate Assessor.

In terms of nutrient standards for school lunches, most councils based initial menu plans around the food group guidelines. Most are now using the *Hungry for Success* Nutmeg nutrient analysis software. Menus and related analyses from councils show that achieving the targets set within the nutrient standards for iron and sodium has proved to be the greatest challenge. Despite that, councils are making good progress towards achieving the standards.

As a result of *Hungry for Success*, there has been a great deal of work done to improve menus. Most schools have a standard set of menus on a fixed cycle, but a few councils have provided support materials to help school catering staff devise their own menus. The increased use of the Nutmeg software will help provide more accurate information and will assist councils in the development of more flexible and appealing menus. Many headteachers have noticed an improvement in food quality and pupils have found food healthier and less greasy. Bread is available in most schools, additional table salt is not. In most schools, the introduction of new menus initially resulted in increased waste; however, familiarity has reduced that, over time.

Pupils who require special and ethnic diets are catered for in most cases, although too few schools have access to clear written policies and procedures for dealing with special dietary needs. Almost all special schools inspected have made good progress in implementing *Hungry for Success* guidance and in mainstream schools, pupils with special needs are, in most cases, fully integrated into dining room arrangements. It was also noted that staff training related to *Hungry for Success* implementation had been undertaken in many ways, including information sessions provided by councils for catering and teaching staff, specific nutrition training, and practical sessions for catering staff to improve cooking skills. Many councils are keen to arrange more training.

The progress report then focused on the underlying principles and key recommendations of *Hungry for Success*.

Principle 1: Positive School/Whole Child Ethos

Hungry for Success is an integral part of the aims of the Health Promoting School. Good knowledge and understanding of food and nutrition are necessary in order for pupils to be able to make informed choices in the dining room. Inspection showed that clear links between health education in the curriculum and food provision in school are being developed. Examples of effective curricular links to *Hungry for Success* include health promoting activities such as tooth-brushing and hand washing schemes, health fairs, a food focus for artwork and school assemblies, and growing schemes.

Principle 2: Partnership Working

Partnerships operate at Scottish Executive level, local authority level and school level. Examples of partnerships within schools include those between catering staff, health professionals, local community groups and parents. Parents themselves are often involved in SNAGs or school boards. Most schools inspected were providing information for parents about 'food in school' issues through handbooks, newsletters and food sampling sessions.

Principle 3: Pupil Consultation

Consultation with key stakeholders has been vital throughout the implementation of *Hungry for Success*, and includes regular consultation with pupils. This has taken place through forums such as pupil councils, SNAGs and Health Promoting Schools groups. Discussion topics included the dining room environment, incentives for making healthy choices, tuck shops and seating arrangements. Some councils issued questionnaires, set up suggestion boxes or distributed comment forms for completion by pupils.

Principle 4: Eliminating Stigma

A few schools have developed systems to ensure complete anonymity for those children entitled to free school meals. Most schools have systems that contribute to reducing stigma but do not necessarily remove it. However, in most schools, pupils were not aware of which children were entitled to free school meals.

Principle 5: Managing the Process

The social experience of lunchtime influences pupils' decisions on whether or not to have school meals. Inspections showed that effective management made sure that an appropriate length of time was allocated for lunch, the queuing and rota systems were organised on an equal opportunities basis, there was adequate supervision, that children chose their own seats, and that pre-ordering of food was in place to cut down excessive waste. Self-evaluation was not yet evident in most schools inspected.

Principles 6 and 7: Influencing Choice and Incentives to Improve Uptake of School Lunches

The physical environment of the dining room is an important feature and many dining rooms were enhanced with artwork or photographic displays. Many had introduced multiple service points (to aid speedy movement of pupils through the serving areas) and point-of-sale information. Incentives like themed menus, slogans and logos helped promote uptake and choice, and almost all pupils found that the dining room provided a pleasant atmosphere. The relationship between catering staff and pupils was considered good in most schools inspected, and staff choosing to eat school meals showed commitment to being role models for pupils in terms of making appropriate menu choices.

Other relevant factors

The provision of free fruit for P1 and P2 pupils was well received by pupils and teaching staff. Milk was available in most schools at lunchtime. Tuck shops are moving towards providing a healthier range of products. None of the schools inspected had vending machines. Most pupils had access to water throughout the school day and children were allowed bottles on their desks. Laura Nicol finished by outlining the main areas of good practice and areas for improvement and development.

Next steps

HMIE will continue to inspect the implementation of *Hungry for Success* in primary and special schools, and will pilot inspections in secondary schools in early 2006. A set of benchmarks is being developed for schools and councils to use as a self-evaluation tool.

5. Examples of Good Practice

Moray Council

To take *Hungry for Success* forward, a steering group made up of different agencies working together was set up to look at food and nutrition, the dining room experience, and the stigma of free school meals. 'Food and nutrition' involved looking at menus, presentation, uptake and suppliers. 'The dining room experience' focused on the seating, decor and general ambience of the dining area. The 'free school meals' issue was about developing cashless catering. The steering group's recommendations would be based on Scottish Executive targets, the cost of the project over its lifecycle, and the manpower available to complete it.

Improving the dining room experience is not just about changing menus. It is also about taking a whole school approach, involving pupils, teachers and catering staff in creating something that will have a lasting impact on the dining area. In Moray, some of the *Hungry for Success* budget was used to help fund an upgrade programme to kitchen and dining room areas, in the form of an art project involving pupils of all ability working positively with staff. With £15,000 in the *Hungry for Success* reserve, a pilot scheme was proposed – involving local artists going into schools to work with the pupils and staff. The money would come from the *Hungry for Success* budget and the resulting artwork would be displayed in the dining halls.

From Moray Council's art development team's perspective, the project was feasible. The infrastructure was in place and there was a substantial database of local freelance visual artists. Through consultation with schools, through the cultural coordinator and arts development worker, artists were matched to schools. Since £60,000 had been set aside in the then current financial year for artists in the area, it became an economic regeneration issue. The project has proved successful and the work has become a source of pride to the schools. When the whole exercise is completed, there will be 46 art galleries spread across Moray. Hopefully, parents picking up their children will visit the dining halls/galleries.

The steering group hopes to find funding to complete the projects in the last 15 primary schools before moving on to the secondary schools – which, with their own art departments, present a different challenge. For Moray Council, the project is a positive example of partnership working.

Highland Council

In Highland, catering is now an integrated part of education, and the school is a part of the whole eating experience. Staff have been trained in *Hungry for Success* objectives, service delivery and nutrition. Curricular and out-of-school activities include food experiences, promotions and theme days. SNAGs, pupil councils, youth forums/websites, parents and school staff all participate in the consultation process. A consultant dietician works one day a week with the catering service, developing menus, nutritional advice and training needs.

Primary schools currently choose six options from a selection of 12. Menus are flexible, to complement the curriculum, and support theme days: for example, there have been fish-tasting sessions. After initial hesitancy, trends are changing. Waste is decreasing and uptake is increasing, particularly for healthy choices at school and at home, where children are influencing parents' food shopping patterns. In secondary schools, carbonated drinks have been replaced by natural choices and varieties of water. No sweets are sold at any school catering outlet: only healthier options. The Health Promoting Schools toolkit has helped introduce healthier snacks, and sports activity has been developed with NHS colleagues and

Active Schools. Secondary schools are well on their way to achieving 2006 targets. The increased uptake of fruit, water and vegetables has been a big success. There is a no-charge policy in cash cafeterias for vegetables. Challenges ahead include reducing waste, increasing uptake of oily fish, making dining rooms more attractive, extending the lunchtime experience, competing more effectively with local and street traders, upgrading kitchens, serveries and equipment, and offering better dining room supervision.

As part of Food for Life, two pilot projects were run in Strathpeffer and Strathgarve Primary Schools. Now schools have organic carrots, milk (not yet organic) sourced in the Highlands, organic free-range eggs supplied locally, and water from Drumnadrochit. All meat, including beef and venison, is sourced from local farmers and negotiations are underway to source fresh chicken locally. Fresh salmon is supplied to schools, and one local soft fruit grower is changing his operations, becoming totally organic to meet school needs. Strong links have been established with organisations and network groups, farms, growers and producers. In 2001, Alness Academy was selected as one of the first 'smart lifestyle' schools. It had a track record of unhealthy eating and a free school meals allocation above the national average. Change was resisted because of limited eating choice at home and pupils' reluctance to break with the unfamiliar. Canteen staff initially resisted change but are now fully engaged.

The School Meals Service invested money for equipment, a SNAG with teachers from the school was started, and the New Community School began to run a subsidised breakfast club. Menus were changed, and the cook improvised with new recipes from books and from her own family meals. A roll bar with an expanded choice of fillings was introduced, and there is now soup every day, with grabbing bowls for fast food. Pupils may buy lunch at the morning break if they are involved in sports at lunchtime. Everything is freshly-packed and healthy. Sandwiches have two salad ingredients plus protein, traditional meals and takeaways were also offered in disposable containers. Uptake has increased considerably, chips are now offered only one day a week, and drinking fountains are encouraging pupils to drink more water.

The approach adopted has been a whole school approach. Information about the menu is available at assembly, from a menu board and on leaflets. The SNAG ran a competition last year to design a healthy choices logo. That has been made into a sticker and put onto healthy choice food. All first year pupils are issued with a young person's guide to the canteen, and 12 'theme days' have been introduced since 2002. The school achieved Health Promoting Schools Level 4 in 2003 and the cook won an award at the Scottish Education Awards.

Fife Council

Key to the Fife Food in Schools Group's implementation of the recommendations of *Hungry for Success* is the belief that food provision in schools is not just about school meals but about the environmental, social and health issues that make up the whole dining experience. *Hungry for Success* has meant revising food provision in schools, offering healthier options in tuck shops and vending machines, and making water more readily available and accessible in school. However, it is recognised that pupils have other choices and can leave school during lunch breaks. When they go out, the food offered by local shops and street traders is often a less healthy option. Even when they stay in school they are not obliged to eat a school meal.

There are other external pressures, like the growth in the ready meal culture, whether take-away or cooked at home in the microwave. Parental influence is very significant, particularly where there is a lack of understanding and skill to provide a healthy diet at home. More than half (53 per cent) of Scotland's school population opt out of school meals, choosing to take packed lunches, go home or buy a take-away from local shops or street traders.

In Fife, the take-up of school meals is higher (60 per cent). One incentive has been the introduction of plasma screens in dining halls, for entertainment purposes. Those who leave school at lunchtime cite the main reasons as: an opportunity to be with their friends, wider food choices and the wish to avoid dining hall queues. Most Fife schools have achieved Scottish Healthy Choices Awards, which encourage suitable healthy choices and value for money. Nevertheless, overcrowded dining halls are deterring pupils and many are opting for shorter queues at food vans outside their school.

The pilot for the Body Fuel van was developed in 2004, in cooperation with local street traders. After six months of working in partnership with local street traders and agreeing prices on competitive products, three vans were leased and adapted, and van staff recruited. Supply kitchens and trained staff were put into place, a bright attractive menu was created, and the Body Fuel vans were ready for business. They offer healthier, attractive food options, all packaged and labelled for maximum appeal. After consultation about environmental, health and location issues, headteachers were invited to pilot the vans. Apart from improving the availability of affordable quality food, discussions about the proposed product range led some existing street traders to adopt some healthy food options themselves. Menu choices include filled rolls, sandwiches, baguettes and wraps, salad boxes, soup, pizza slices, filled backed potatoes, various healthier drinks and water. Using the slogan: 'Fresh food in the fresh air', the three Body Fuel vans service two schools each. They have proved very popular.

A survey was conducted to guide provision for the future. Fizzy drinks, though being phased out, still top the list for most pupils. In choosing where to eat at lunchtime, convenience and being with friends are the main criteria, and baguettes/sandwiches are the most popular food choice. Feedback on the pilot has been encouraging. Dining hall queues are shorter because of the increased number of service points. The vans are popular and convenient, proving that fast food can be healthy food. They provide healthier options because they offer more choice. More pupils choose to stay in schools during lunchtimes. Existing traders have been influenced: many now offer homemade soup and brown bread sandwiches and are trying to introduce new and healthier items. Caterers have noticed an increase in turnover.

There are still challenges ahead. S1 and S2 pupils are choosing less healthy options and the Food Liaison Group notes that many local vendors still sell food products three times higher in sugar than recommended. For some, overnight change is not an option because of limited facilities or pre-ordered food. The way forward involves building on the success of the pilot and increased partnership working with local street traders to expand healthier choices. Councils may consider revising food and street-trading policies, making healthier food provision a condition of street trading licences.

West Lothian Council

The West Lothian Food and Health Steering Group, Eat Right West Lothian, has worked with NHS West Lothian and West Lothian Council to provide guidance on food and health, adopting a whole school approach. **healthyschools+**, Edinburgh and Lothians' structural approach to healthy schools, promotes: curriculum, teaching and learning; links with family and community; the role of specialist services; the health and welfare of staff; the organisation, ethos and climate; the physical environment. West Lothian's progress on *Hungry for Success* has involved big changes in menus, consultation with everyone involved, general improvements, and the ongoing whole school approach.

Primary school menus, now well established, are attractive, comprehensive and offer a nutritional breakdown showing how the amount of nutrients relates to *Hungry for Success* guidelines. While evidence shows schools as being within 10 per cent of the guidelines for saturated fat and sodium, the guideline is not being met for iron content. However, the

problem has been addressed and there is evidence of improvement. West Lothian works in partnership with suppliers, looking at new products and reassessing content. The computer software Nutmeg aids the creation of menus and gives nutritional information and recipes for new dishes. This year, the P1 intake received a welcome pack containing a welcome letter from Domestic Services, the Free Fruit Initiative leaflet, a copy of the current menu, a small coin purse and a pencil.

A survey was carried out over the past two years on a selection of primary schools, to find out which dishes the children like/dislike and what alternatives they would like to see on the menu. All new items are tried and tested in selected schools and when a new menu becomes operational, tasters are put out the day before to allow the children to 'try before they buy'. Kitchen supervisors also give feedback on how new dishes are received. A secondary school pupil questionnaire was issued and the results are being collated; the *Hungry for Success* working group ran a prize draw to encourage pupils to complete it. With funding from *Hungry for Success*, four schools were piloted for dining hall improvements, and appropriate changes were made. Since the pilot, other schools have received furniture and other enhancements, all designed to heighten the awareness of healthy meals and healthy lifestyles. Mealtimes are integral to learning about health improvement, social skills and the whole school community.

In terms of staff development, all domestic services food handlers sit a Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) Elementary Food Hygiene course at West Lothian College, updated in-house when necessary. Selected staff attend a night class at West Lothian College and there is an accelerated learning course for which a national qualification in food production is awarded. Many staff have attended 'Getting the Message Across' training, offered in partnership with West Lothian Food and Health Group. The group has been involved with PTAs, pupil councils, pupil forums and is involved in a SNAG at a school working towards being a Health Promoting School. In secondary schools, 'burger, chips and a can' meal deals have now been replaced by healthier deals, set at good value prices.

Menus will continue to change and adapt to meet *Hungry for Success* guidelines and customer expectations. There will be more work with secondary schools to meet the *Hungry for Success* deadline in 2006. In partnership with suppliers, there will be ongoing improvements in the ingredients and products used. Collecting and acting on information from customers will be used to provide a better service, and there will be ongoing partnership working with all schools to achieve the whole school approach.

East Ayrshire Council

There is a commitment to ensuring that all schools in East Ayrshire are Health Promoting Schools. Physical activity and the provision of healthy and nourishing meals, drinks and snacks are key features of that commitment. The aim is to provide every customer with the best service and value for money. *Hungry for Success* has helped create a 'best value' service, has engaged with the curriculum in schools, and has helped establish a food culture where an enthusiasm for catering and promoting good food has been rekindled.

Between 2003 and 2004, the focus was on buying, cooking and serving fresh food. Radical menus and recipe books were introduced, and all processed food was removed in line with Scottish Nutrient Standards. A Healthy Choice Award was established, breakfast clubs and increased portion sizes were piloted. Sweets were removed from vending machines and healthy vending introduced. The scheme has run at a £70,000 loss, but has been considered as being worth it. Cashless meals were also piloted, along with free bread and free fruit. Improvements have been made to dining rooms and new equipment has been purchased so that 'Metro Hot', 'Metro Fast Track' and 'Metro Delibars' can operate successfully.

From 2004 to 2005, time has been spent engaging with staff and parents, with teacher/parent conferences well attended. Through links with home economics departments, *Hungry for Success* has been used to encourage healthy eating via taster sessions, healthy cooking demonstrations and information leaflets. In addition, 34 breakfast clubs were set up, staff levels were increased to reduce queues, and catering training seminars were held to offer nutritional training. Dining rooms were made more attractive, fizzy drinks vending machines were removed, 'foodlab' presentations were organised, and organic meals using local produce were introduced. That activity was linked to government (and media) policy placing school meals at the forefront of health improvement. With 30 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions arising from food production, there is a mandate for change in food production and distribution practices.

To assess the viability of an organic meal service, East Ayrshire Council piloted Food for Life at Hurlford Primary, Kilmarnock, and it has been extended to 11 schools in East Ayrshire. Links were established with local suppliers, and recipes/menus developed. Links were also made with the educational curriculum to increase pupil awareness of food. Given that 31 per cent of harmful greenhouse gas emissions relate to food consumption, local and regional suppliers were invited to deliver meat, bread, vegetables and dairy products to the schools. The increase in uptake was 10 per cent, the increase in costs between 20 per cent and 25 per cent. With support from councils, parents, pupils and teachers, a focus from media and the Soil Association and funding from *Hungry for Success*, there has been a genuine opportunity to innovate.

The future focus will be on winning the hearts and minds of all involved, carrying out effective marketing and communication, involving mentors or motivators, involving home economics departments in secondary schools, and integrating more closely with the whole school. It will also encourage more work with parents, getting a mandate from them for Food for Life. There will be ongoing training of catering managers generally, and specifically in presentation skills, improvement in dining room environments, the setting up of procurement contracts with local producers, further recipe and menu development, and an ongoing commitment to fresh food and to establishing a food culture. Most importantly, it will be seen as a community development rather than just a school initiative.

East Renfrewshire Council

East Renfrewshire has taken a whole school approach, working closely with council catering departments and education to embed health and fitness in the culture. For the *Hungry for Success – Next Steps* seminars, it presented three distinct areas of good practice: a pupil menu competition, a fruit tuck scheme, and visual hands-on menu boards for classrooms.

The pupil menu competition resulted from pupil consultation with the Director of Education. The pupils were given criteria and carried it through into homework exercises. It was piloted in one school and then rolled out to all other schools. A special menu week was organised. Apart from the benefits to the classroom curriculum, there were also cultural and health spin-offs.

A typical week's menu included a different type of soup every day, main meals of chicken, meat (twice) and fish (twice), all served in different ways, and desserts that included two different flavours of yoghurt, ice cream, and two different flavours of mousse. In addition to the menus devised through the menu competition, East Renfrewshire offers 'Meal Deals Healthy Route'. There is the 'Soup and Sandwich Route', the 'Soup and Baguette Route', the 'Salad Deal', the 'Smart Route', the 'Main Meal Route', the 'Pizza Deal', the 'Panini Route'

and the 'Pizza Route'. All deals include soup of the day and bread, fruit salad and chilled milk or a bottle of water.

The second example of good practice is fruit tuck, in which fruit is washed, peeled and cut into pieces or segments for P1, P2 and P3. It had been proved that fruit uptake increased considerably when this was done. The fruit was presented attractively in glass dishes, easy to see and looking appetising. Although it was free for children in P1 to P3, it was offered to the rest of the school at lunchtimes for a cost of 20p. The actual cost of offering the fruit is 53p. The deficit has been made up from *Hungry for Success* funding.

The third example of good practice is visual menu boards. Every item on the menu was carefully and artistically photographed and the photos were then put onto magnetic backing so that magnetic pictures were created. Mobile whiteboards were purchased and the flexible menu boards were trialled before being rolled out to every school. This exercise adheres to *Hungry for Success* in terms of linking talk of healthy eating with what children are eating in school. The teacher bases a lesson on the magnetic cards on the whiteboards, and there is evidence showing that this approach has encouraged pupils to eat vegetables and various other food products because they have a new understanding of what they are eating.

6. Workshops: Delegate Responses

Workshop A – Consultation

A key to successful consultation is that all key stakeholders: pupils, teachers/headteachers, non-teaching staff, caterers, parents, NHS staff and representatives from the wider community, are able to attend meetings. Young people must be involved and given ownership in terms of decisions being made. Finding a suitable time is difficult: lunchtimes automatically exclude cooks and serving staff, and probably many parents and other groups. Time is always a problem. Headteachers should be prepared to prioritise and to create the time for consultation.

Meeting the challenge means accepting, understanding, supporting and helping to implement change. It is important to be real and honest, otherwise the consultation is flawed. Some caterers, for example, may still be driving the ‘chips ’n cheese’ mentality – possibly because when chips were taken off the menu in one school, pupils voted with their feet and the school kitchen closed. It has since reopened, offering healthier food, and pupils have returned. There is a strong health argument for removing/reducing chip provision, but people have to be realistic and focused about consultation. Young people need to know the parameters.

Is there sometimes an argument for making decisions without consultation? In some schools, fizzy drinks vending machines were removed without consultation. Pupils can now access water from drinking fountains, or buy it, and are offered a free drink and bread with a main meal. Five-fruit salads are also on offer. In that case, no consultation seemed justified. Other schools replaced machines with healthier options after consultation about a replacement. Another school took away the fizzy drinks and replaced them with fruit smoothies. After consultation, one school brought in breakfast clubs to provide nourishment during the exam period.

The link between food and fitness should be reinforced. One school has a ‘walk to school’ initiative, and healthy packed lunches are rewarded. There is debate about whether parents should be told not to send children to school with unhealthy packed lunches or should be consulted and educated about packed lunch content. It is possible to be too restrictive. One caterer suggested that ‘there is nothing wrong with sticky toffee pudding or fish suppers every now and then. They just shouldn’t be eaten every day.’ Many people felt that not enough information goes back to parents. Tasting/information stalls or a healthy cooking promotion at parents’ nights would show the quality/good value of the food available to pupils.

School should not be seen as the only source of food education. Youth groups, residential experiences and events in the wider community offer opportunities to consult with and educate young people. Locating healthy vending machines within reach of those using school facilities is good for health and profit. Many community facilities, like public swimming pools, need the profits from vending machines to subsidise them. Decisions should come from consultation with the local authority, which is sometimes a slow, tedious process.

Workshop B – Promotion

There needs to be more food health promotion in personal and social development, and it should be carried into school councils. Food education has a very low status in schools. That must change, with experts brought in to promote healthy eating. Management, caterers and teachers must work together to ensure that all pupils, not just home economics pupils, are taught about healthy eating. Sharing good practice is one way of promoting healthy eating, especially in groups such as parent–teacher associations (PTAs) and school councils.

Delegates believe there is not enough expertise in terms of promotion and that there should be shared learning between councils.

Teachers should adopt healthier options and set a good role model for the pupils, who need to be educated about healthier options so they can make healthier food choices. Those choices need to be packaged more attractively. Pupils complain that they do not know what is on offer until they are served, and are pressured to make a fast choice. Menu boards at the start of the queuing area, or displayed a week in advance, may help – although one school tried a pre-ordering initiative and found that few pupils returned the forms and others changed their minds. Meal deals work well, especially when less popular food is presented more palatably.

Induction days for primary pupils and parents provide an opportunity to let them know about healthy food options. There could also be demonstrations illustrating the sugar content in carbonated drinks or the fat content in sausages and burgers. Packaging too is important in selling the food to pupils. Where time is an issue, staggered lunchtimes and pre-paid cards for vending machines could help make school dinners more popular. ‘Family’ tables, with adults and pupils interacting over lunch, have been successful with some summer activity groups: more healthy food was consumed, as children followed the adults’ example. Healthy eating could be promoted in the community with a ‘shopkeepers’ handbook’ advising vendors on healthier food options. Fife Council is in talks with the local traders, encouraging them to adopt healthier options.

Workshop C – Effective Partnerships

There are socioeconomic, environmental, nutritional and food safety factors involved in healthy eating that affect young people on a local, regional and global level. Young people eat the way they do because they are influenced by parents, peers, advertising, cost and convenience, taste and availability. *Hungry for Success* partnerships can be combinations of those groups and could include the school, NHS boards, catering providers, the council and wider community. They can be casual or at a more formal strategic level. In positive partnerships, people work together and share aims. Consistency of priority is vital. Partnerships do not work if one partner does not consider certain issues to have the same level of importance. Partnership problems arise when caterers, who work in a commercial environment and have to make a profit, are reluctant to take on healthy eating ideas that could jeopardise this. Partners have to understand that, and a solution might be sharing expertise in terms of specific dietary needs – learning from each other.

Hungry for Success needs more community-wide support and understanding. Other partners, such as youth clubs, must be identified. It can be too easy to ignore everything that is going on outside school. Schools can and should work with other partners (industry, for example) to find solutions to common problems, albeit from a different perspective. Similarly, with catering staff and the school management teams there should be more inclusion in terms of *Hungry for Success* and Health Promoting Schools.

Partnership consultation cannot be a hollow box-ticking exercise. Complaints from pupils have to be taken seriously and a solution found. There may be conflicting agendas. When McDonalds, who offer unhealthy choices, start offering healthy choices, the line is blurred. Partnerships can raise awareness of unhealthy food. Where children are involved in local product development, it may trigger change. It is important to work together for each aim within the main sharing relationship, but sometimes there has to be a trade-off. There has to be support from elected members and through other groups (such as APSE), sharing knowledge on what partnerships are at local and official level. People need to work in partnerships, not just in schools but in the community. And funding has to flow smoothly to all partners.

Workshop D – Planning for the Future

In some areas, when vending machines were removed, the schools started selling carbonated drinks and confectionery. *Hungry for Success* coordinators, caterers and health professionals feel that some attitudes concerning healthy eating need to change. When some teachers are approached on this topic, they roll their eyes and look bored. Leadership has to come from the top. School kitchens need to be adequately funded so that the catering staff can cook nutritionally balanced lunches. One school kitchen has only two hobs for making soup, so the canteen produces only two pans of soup a day.

Stopping pupils leaving school at lunchtime to use local/street vendors could be solved by imposing a 'lock-in' policy, but a more positive approach is supported. However, trying to accommodate more than 1,000 pupils going through the canteen in 50 minutes is extremely difficult. Other areas in the school, such as the assembly hall or classrooms, could be used. Staggered lunchtimes for different age groups, setting up healthy food vans or influencing those already supplying (mainly unhealthy) food to the pupils, are possibilities. Allowing pupils to sit in the canteen with their peers, improving the atmosphere of the dining room, having theme days with different food items, and changing the layout of the canteen are all strategies that could be tried. A pre-ordering system, allowing the pupils to take their food out of the canteen, could be considered – along with creating a 'grab and go' system, making the healthier foods cheaper and/or extending the meal service throughout the lunch hour. Instituting a cashless system might remove stigma and improve the uptake of free school meals.

Accommodation is a huge problem because of limited capacity, unattractive environment and non-stimulating presentation. Plans for new school buildings should consider dining facilities, and pupils and catering staff should have an input into their design.

There has to be more support from teachers and headteachers, supervising and integrating with pupils, treating lunchtime as a social occasion and acting as role models. SNAG meetings need to be more positive – to include views of catering staff, with a shared agenda, fulfilling the aims of partnership working. Catering staff, many of whom are highly trained, should not be made to feel that they are undervalued. Parents, particularly those with vulnerable family circumstances, should be encouraged into schools to contribute. There should be partnership working to deal with litter problems.

7. The Next Steps

In terms of taking good practice forward, a need for champions has been identified. All of those involved in partnerships, from pupils to the Scottish Executive itself, can champion and promote the cause of healthy eating by committing to the aspirations of *Hungry for Success*. The partnership approach underpins everything, and commitment is essential. There is a clear need for more engagement with parents and pupils, and for more support, particularly from the Scottish Executive and HMIE.

The *Hungry for Success – Next Steps* seminars have provided a sounding board for the experiences and opinions of those at the ‘chalk face’. The good practice sessions were particularly valuable in demonstrating how the principles of *Hungry for Success* and Health Promoting Schools can be successfully applied. Many issues were raised during the three days and although the delegates were from varying geographic locations throughout Scotland, they shared many of the same problems and dilemmas. Delegates were given an insight into the various successful – and unsuccessful – initiatives around the country, which they can take back for discussion with their own immediate partners. This holistic approach – the open sharing of information – is fundamental to the achievement of *Hungry for Success*.

The delegates have had some time now to reflect on their experience of the seminars, on what has been achieved so far and how much work there is still to do in creating and implementing a healthier diet for the young people of Scotland. This report is intended to be an accurate record of both the formal and informal aspects of the seminars and is directed not only at those who attended but also at those who were unable to be there but want to follow the ethos of *Hungry for Success*.

The message coming from the seminars is clear: we have to maintain and build on our successes so far, and we have to stop talking and start *shouting* about what is going on out there in our schools.

PUPIL OBSERVATIONS

‘At first, when they took away the “chip days”, people were disappointed but then got used to it.’

‘We have chips every day in our canteen but we now have a new buffet salad bar. It’s popular with the girls. We’re getting a new baked potato machine. I don’t think we should have chips, burgers and hot dogs on the menu every day.’

‘Our school’s only five minutes away from town so people walk down and meet up with friends. It’s easier for other schools. Their nearest shop is about a mile away.’

‘A lot of ice cream vans stop outside. I go into town one day a week, to McDonald’s or Subway, or one of the kebab places.’

‘The food served in the dining hall is dire. I really like the idea of the vans. I’ve never heard about vans outside schools, but I think it would be a good idea. People would prefer to queue at vans.’

‘We have one sitting. The school is being refurbished, but the dining hall is still much too small, even with half the school already going down to the village or going outside the eating area.’

‘They’ve done up the canteen but it’s still too cramped. There are two areas for eating but only one way through and it gets all blocked up.’

‘If you’re at the end of the queue the macaroni cheese is all mushed up. Maybe they should serve individual portions but I suppose it’s hard to know how many to make. They did it with fruit salad.’

‘If food improves and there’s more choice, I think the area it’s served in would have to improve too. A bigger hall’s not the answer if the food quality is bad because no-one would want to be there.’

‘Girls eat more healthily because they are watching their figures. They’re more conscious about what they eat – whereas boys don’t really care.’

‘I don’t go to breakfast clubs because I’m still waking up at that time, but I would consider after-school clubs. We’re always hungry after rugby practice so it would be good to go straight there.’

‘People buy non-healthy food because it’s cheaper. We have new vending machines but they’re too expensive so we tend not to use them. Why pay 60p for a flapjack when you can get chips for 30p?’

‘We didn’t have vending machines before but now we have ones that sell water and other non-fizzy drinks. They are not competitively priced – water is 80p, which I think is fairly extortionate.’

‘People knowing that you get free school meals matters when you are in first and second year, but not when you get to fifth and sixth year.’

‘You wouldn’t know who gets free school meals because of the smart cards.’

‘First thing in the morning you get sheets, click on what you want and pick it up at lunchtime.’

OTHER QUOTES

Headteacher

‘Many headteachers will see this as another initiative coming in from the Scottish Executive, something else to deal with in an already overcrowded curriculum.’

‘It can be overwhelming, but it works when you can see the links. I don’t think the integrated approach is grasped by everyone – but I think it needs to be.’

‘The major changes I have seen have been with the menu and how much healthier the food has become. I’m really pleased to see the children choosing fruit and soup. On the first day we offered soup, the children at the back of the queue were saying: I hope they have it tomorrow.’

Catering officer

‘A lot has come up about queuing, facilities, lack of space, about whether or not the children go out at lunchtime, and I think it has been valuable chatting to the other people here, sharing experiences.’

‘Our concerns are around the need to make a profit, the hours involved for staff and being able to get trained staff. I think that, together with getting supplies and fresh produce, is a huge problem in the bigger cities.’

Senior management (in school)

‘This should have happened years ago.’

‘It has been difficult for home economics teachers to equate what they were teaching in classroom with practice in school itself. It is bad enough to compete with adverse conditions outside school but to have it going on in school too made it difficult.’

‘We surveyed every pupil and found that they hated long queues, slow service, and lack of choice or restricted choice, especially at the end of the queue. We took our findings to our supportive local authority and now we have a colourful revamped dining room with more space – and an additional servery, which has speeded up the queues.’

‘We now have two freshly-made soups every day, wraps, hot baguettes, sandwiches, cold baguettes, soup also served in a take-away cup, soup and sandwich deals, boxes of fruit or pasta salads, take-away cups of pasta or rice dishes – a huge increase in range, and we use smart cards. The number of people registering for school meals has jumped.’

‘Pupils can stay in the cafeteria area for the whole lunchtime because we have opened up two other areas and there’s plenty of room. We have sound systems, music, special offers like fun days. We have a hot drinks machine, fresh chilled filtered water and two vending machines with healthier snacks. We’ve lost money but we have to be realistic and we intend to promote and market even more.’