

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for Schools

19th July 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

Dear Minister,

Launch of the National Food Strategy – Recommendations for Food Education

“It is time to take food education seriously”

We write to you as a network of leading food education providers, who earlier this year came together for a round table to contribute to the National Food Strategy. This network provides the food education material used by schools across the country; it teaches or supports the teaching of food education in schools; it trains the teachers; and it builds children’s knowledge of food systems, farming and the countryside and sustainable food production.

Our work is almost entirely funded through non-profit fundraising, grants and donations; few of us get any money from government. Without this work, food education in schools would not happen.

We are proud to see that the core recommendations put forward by this network have been included in the National Food Strategy. It highlights that culinary skills and knowledge have declined across every social class since convenience food became widely available. And it calls for food education to be central to the national curriculum, as a key reform to help escape the ‘Junk Food Cycle’ to protect the NHS and support reforms to build a better food system for a healthier nation.

We urge the Department to ensure that the NFS recommendations are accepted by government.

Food education is on the curriculum but there needs to be the training, budget and resources to allow teachers to deliver it well. We therefore fully support Recommendation 3, to launch a new Eat and Learn initiative for schools that would ensure that children start learning about food earlier, and that all food lessons are well funded and rigorously inspected by Ofsted; that the Food A-level should be brought back, to give students a clear route into the food industry; and support the NFS measures to improve the overall food culture in schools.

The National Food Strategy also says: “We must ensure that as many children as possible finish school with the knowledge and ability to cook healthy and nutritious food for themselves.” **The Department for**

Education must become a cheerleader for more and better food education. We are writing to offer to work with your department to do this and help deliver the National Food Strategy's recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

Sara Jayne Stanes, CEO, **Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and Adopt a School Trust**

Richard Larkin, General Manager, **Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and Adopt a School Trust**

Fiona Gately, **Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and Adopt a School Trust**

Helena Houghton, Executive Director, **Royal Academy of Culinary Arts' Adopt a School Trust**

Stephanie Slater, Founder/CEO, **School Food Matters**

Roy Ballam, Managing Director and Head of Education, **British Nutrition Foundation**

Caroline Drummond, Chief Executive, **LEAF and Countryside Classroom**

Nicholas Saphir, Chair, **AHDB**

James Toop, CEO, **Biteback 2030**

Myles Bremner, CEO, **Bremner Consulting**

Timothy Baker, Head teacher, **Charlton Manor Primary School**

Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive, **Chefs in Schools**

Gary Maclean, Executive Chef, **City of Glasgow College**

Abigail Page, Co-author, **Food Education Learning Landscape Report**

Rosie MCarthy, Co-founder, **Cookwise**

Jill Attenborough, CEO, **Country Trust**

Sophia Koniarska, Associate Director, **Food for Life, Soil Association**

Jeanette Orrey, Co-founder, **Food for Life, Soil Association**

Anna Taylor, Executive Taylor, **Food Foundation**

Louise T Davies, Founder, **Food Teachers Centre**

Mandie Turner, Co-founder, **Cookwise**

Annabelle O'Toole, Manager, **Let's Get Cooking**

Katherine Hale, Food Education Lead, **Jamie Oliver Group**

Minette Batters, President, **NFU**

Molly Shaher, Chair of PACE, **Middlesbrough College**

Prof Jayne Woodside, **Queen's University Belfast and Genius School Food Network**

Nick Linney, Chair, **Samworth Church Academy**

Alison Swan Parente, Founder, **School of Artisan Food**

Patrick Holden, Founder, **Sustainable Food Trust**

Richard Dunne, Director, **Harmony in Education**

Barry Haughton, **Square Food Foundation**

Dr Caroline Sarojini Hart, Lecturer, **University of Sheffield**

Dr Maria Bryant, **UK Association for the Study of Obesity; Fix Our Food and CONNECTS-Food**

CC:

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP, Prime Minister

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Health

Professor Chris Whitty, Office for Health Promotion

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs