



About School Food Matters

School Food Matters is a charity on a mission to ensure that every child enjoys fresh sustainable food at school and understands where their food comes from. We work with children, schools, parents, local authorities and government departments to get the very best food for children during their time at school for their health and happiness.

Since 2007, School Food Matters has been devising, developing and delivering exciting food education programmes which have reached tens of thousands of children across London and beyond.

Introduction

Our response is framed around our areas of expertise; school food, food education and issues relating to children's health and wellbeing.

To prepare our response, we consulted with partner organisations campaigning in the field. We also conducted a survey of UK parents, school staff and governors to find out their views on food education and school meals across primary (58%), secondary (32%) and sixth form (10%) environments. This survey centred on the Government's proposed Healthy Schools Rating Scheme and included discussion of Ofsted's role in monitoring how schools support children to keep themselves healthy. We received responses from 987 individuals of which 55% were family members, 34% school staff and 5% governors. The full report, supported by over 30 organisations, can be found here: <http://bit.ly/HSRSofsted>

Proposal 1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce a 'quality of education' judgement?

Strongly agree

Comments:

We celebrate Ofsted's move towards a "holistic approach to considering the quality of education" and believe that this holistic approach requires that Ofsted inspectors consider how schools are supporting children to keep themselves healthy. With children in school for 190 days each year, schools have a unique opportunity to model good eating habits and teach children about the food that will keep them healthy and ready to learn.

Healthy food and food education are integral to meeting Ofsted's objective of shifting to a curriculum focus and supporting learners' educational attainment. Research shows that healthy

school meals significantly improve educational outcomes¹, in particular in English and Science, and can lead to a reduction in absenteeism due to sickness. A study from Finland demonstrates that a healthy diet (rich in vegetables, fruit, berries, whole grain, fish and unsaturated fats, and low in sugary products) is associated with better reading skills² in the first three school years. Recent research has also found that providing primary school children with a free and nutritious meal before school can boost reading, writing and maths results³ by the equivalent of two months' progress over the course of a year. Further, a Children's Food Trust study demonstrated that children in primary schools are 3 times more likely to concentrate in the classroom following improvements to the food and dining room.⁴

We therefore propose the following additions to wording in the Framework to help address this issue (additions shown in red for clarity):

Pages 10/11: 25. Implementation:

“teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning. The resources and materials that teachers select – in a way that does not create unnecessary workload for staff – reflect the provider’s ambitious intentions for the course of study and clearly support the intent of a coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning, **health** and employment”

Pages 12/13: 28. Leadership and management:

“Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management by evaluating the extent to which: ...those with responsibility for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its statutory duties, **for example** under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the ‘Prevent’ strategy and safeguarding **and, for example, in relation to school food standards and curriculum requirements for understanding the principles of nutrition and healthy eating.**

“Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management by evaluating the extent to which: ... **leaders create an environment where pupil health and well-being is consistently and actively promoted through the policies and actions of the whole school community.**”

Proposal 2

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed separation of inspection judgements about learners’ personal development and learners’ behaviour and attitudes?

Strongly agree

¹ Healthy School Meals and Educational Outcomes: Institute for Social and Economic Research: January 2009

² Diet quality and academic achievement: a prospective study among primary school children. Haapala E et al. 2016

³ Magic Breakfast: Evaluating the effectiveness of school breakfast provision: Education Endowment Foundation: November 2016

⁴ Children's Food Trust, School Lunch and Learning Behaviour in Primary Schools: an intervention study: September 2007

Comments:

We agree with the proposed separation because we believe it gives an opportunity to bring the needed focus to learners' personal development.

That said, all language related to healthy eating that was part of the 2015 framework has been removed. As demonstrated in Ofsted's thematic review on obesity, schools have a role to play in creating a healthy environment for learners. We therefore propose that the phrase "including through exercising and healthy eating" be reintroduced to the framework. This would read as (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 12: 27. Personal development:

"Inspectors will make a judgement on the personal development of learners by evaluating the extent to which: ... the curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy, **including through exercising and healthy eating.**"

Early Years**Proposal 3**

No comment

Additional comments in relation to the detail set out in the early years draft inspection handbook.**Page 37: 148. Grade descriptors for personal development:**

We celebrate the inclusion of the following criteria under the inspection standards for a good early years provider:

"Practitioners provide a healthy diet and exercise for children in their care. They give clear messages to children about why it is important to eat, drink, rest and exercise."

This language and intention should be added to the handbooks for all educational settings.

Maintained schools and academies**Proposal 4**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed focus of section 8 inspections of good schools and non-exempt outstanding schools and the proposal to increase the length of these inspections from the current one day to two days?

Strongly agree

Comments:

We agree with increasing the length of these inspections to two days. We believe it is essential that the section 8 inspection include the assessment of how schools are helping learners keep themselves healthy as one of the “specific elements” assessed regarding personal development (paragraph 270 of School inspection handbook).

Ofsted’s thematic review on obesity and School Food Matters’ report on the Healthy School Rating Scheme (page 15 <http://bit.ly/HSRSofsted>) both highlighted that parents want Ofsted reporting to help them understand how schools are supporting the health of their children. Therefore, this should be included in section 8 inspections as well. We propose that paragraph 279 in the School inspection handbook include the phrase “and promote a healthy lifestyle for learners”. This would read as (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 86: 279. Pupil’ wider development:

“Inspectors will consider the extent to which the curriculum extends beyond the academic, vocational or technical and whether the school goes the extra mile to give pupils a rich set of experiences **and promote a healthy lifestyle for learners.**”

Proposal 5

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed introduction of on-site preparation for all section 5 inspections, and for section 8 inspections of good schools, on the afternoon prior to the inspection?

No comment

Proposal 6

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal not to look at non-statutory internal progress and attainment data and our reasons why?

No comment

Additional comments in relation to the detail set out in the draft school inspection handbook

Comment 1

In 2013, the subsidiary guidance for inspectors page 76 stated:

“Inspectors should consider the food on offer at the school and atmosphere of the school canteen. They should ...consider how lunch time and the dining space contribute to good behaviour and the culture in the school, including by spending time in the lunch hall, and ask school leaders how they help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children and, specifically, whether their dietary needs have been considered.” This language and sentiment is not present in the draft School inspection handbook.

To assess how schools are supporting children to keep themselves healthy, wording should be inserted into the school inspection handbook as follows (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 27: 91. Talking to and observing pupils outside lessons:

“Inspectors must ensure that they observe pupils in a range of situations outside normal lessons to evaluate other aspects of personal development, behaviour and attitudes, for example: ... during lunchtime, including in the dining hall, and break times or playtimes, **and ask school leaders how they help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children.**”

A healthy food culture in schools can support both health and educational attainment, as evidenced in answer to Proposal 1; it is therefore important that this criterion be included in the new handbook.

Comment 2

All maintained schools must teach the national curriculum including Cooking and Nutrition in KS1-3. We would therefore expect inspectors to look at the delivery of Cooking and Nutrition and note if a maintained school fails to deliver the subject.

In Ofsted’s thematic review on obesity, although 89% of schools sampled “had some timetabled curriculum time for teaching about food and healthy eating”, only 26% “offered activities such as cooking” (page 18). As the report itself states, “for something that is explicitly set out in the key stage 2 curriculum, the proportion of children being taught to cook is very low” (page 5). In addition to its being mandated in the national curriculum, the review also highlights that “more cooking in the curriculum was something parents wanted to see” (page 5). It is therefore important that inspectors check for delivery of Cooking and Nutrition during inspections.

To achieve this, the following language could be added into the handbook (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 41: 159. Quality of education:

“All pupils in maintained schools are expected to study the national curriculum subjects, religious education and age-appropriate sex education, **including cooking and nutrition.**”

Comment 3

Those with responsibility for governance need to ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Statutory duties include compliance with the school food standards. We propose the following wording (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 64: 224. Leadership and management – governance:

“... those with governance/oversight are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equalities Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the ‘Prevent’ duty and safeguarding **and, for example, in relation to school food standards and curriculum requirements for understanding the principles of nutrition and healthy eating.** Inspectors will explore how governors carry out this responsibility. Please note, inspectors are not expected to construct or review a list of duties.”

Although inspectors are not expected to construct or review a list of duties, we would expect the guidance to reference compliance with the school food standards.

Comment 4

Ofsted's thematic review on obesity and School Food Matters' report on the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme (page 15 <http://bit.ly/HSRSofsted>) both highlighted that parents want Ofsted reports to help them understand how schools are supporting the health of their children. We propose the following additional wording (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 86: 279. Pupils' wider development:

"Inspectors will consider the extent to which the curriculum extends beyond the academic, vocational or technical and whether the school goes the extra mile to give pupils a rich set of experiences **and to promote a healthy lifestyle for learners**"

Comment 5

We agree wholeheartedly that sport/physical activity is key to children's health and wellbeing but we turn to evidence on childhood obesity, which clearly shows that physical activity is secondary to calorie consumption when tackling obesity

(https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/sites/default/files/Bite_Size_Report.pdf).

Simply, you can't outrun a bad diet and it is essential that assessment of healthy personal development include food as well as physical activity. We therefore recommend the addition of the following language (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 57: 202. Personal development:

"developing pupils' understanding of how to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle **and a healthy diet**, including giving ample opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities **and to learn about nutrition and how to cook.**"

Non-association independent schools

Proposal 7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that inspectors should normally use the non-specialist curriculum as their primary source of evidence in assessing the extent to which the school meets the quality of education criteria?

No comment

Proposal 8

To what extent do you agree or disagree that where non-association independent schools have been found to improve or decline at an additional inspection, Ofsted should provide up-to-date judgements about the school's current performance?

No comment

Additional comments in relation to the detail set out in the non-association independent schools draft inspection handbook.

All students, regardless of their academic setting, deserve support to keep themselves healthy. Ofsted inspections should ensure that independent schools demonstrate how they create a healthy environment at school supported by cooking, nutrition and healthy food, not just physical activity.

As stated above, we agree physical activity is key to children's health and wellbeing but we turn to evidence on childhood obesity that shows that physical activity is secondary to calorie consumption (https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/sites/default/files/Bite_Size_Report.pdf).

Additionally, School Food Matters' report on the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme (page 9 <http://bit.ly/HSRSofsted>) shows strong support from parents that all schools, regardless of their funding status, should offer healthy food and "an environment that prioritises their health and well-being as part of their learning" (quote from primary school parent).

We therefore recommend the addition of the following language (additions shown in red for clarity):

Page 48:192. Judgment on personal development:

"developing pupils' understanding of how to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle AND A HEALTHY DIET, including giving ample opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities **and to learn about nutrition and how to cook.**"

Further education and skills

Proposal 9

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal to reduce the types of provision we grade and specifically report on will make our inspection reports more coherent and inclusive?

No comment

Proposal 10

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed model for short inspections?

No comment

Proposal 11

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the timescale within which providers that are judged to require improvement receive their next full inspection should be extended from '12 to 24 months' to '12 to 30' months'?

No comment
