

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

The Rt Hon Vicky Ford MP
Minister of State for Schools

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Health

The Rt Hon Jo Churchill MP
Minister for Public Health

16 July 2021

We write to seek urgent clarification on the status of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, which has not yet been signed off. Any further delay will threaten the reinstatement of the scheme in September 2021 when schools re-open for the new school year.

We urgently ask that you confirm:

1. When the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme will be reinstated

2.3 million children are eligible for the scheme and will be missing out on a portion of fruit or vegetable every day the scheme is not in operation in our schools at a time when more than 4 in 5 children are not eating their 5-A-Day.

Almost one third of children aged 5-10 eat less than one portion of vegetables a day. Vegetable consumption follows a strong income gradient, with the poorest 20% eating an average of one portion of vegetables less compared to the richest 20%.¹

Any delay to the reinstatement of the School Fruit and Veg Scheme in September threatens to compound the already low levels of consumption of fruit and vegetables among young children.

2. What plans Government has to act upon the recommendation from the National Food Strategy

The National Food Strategy published 15 of July *“recommend that the government doubles the funding for the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, from £40.4m to £80.8m. But it should give the money directly to schools rather than administering the scheme centrally.”*

3. That the scheme is extended to all primary school children

¹ [Peas Please Veg Facts 2021](#)

Expanding the scheme to all 4.7 million children in primary school would be a remarkable value for money measure to help Government meet the ambitions of the National Food Strategy and Obesity Strategy. It would provide a 'safety net' to complement free school meals and help to level off some of the inequalities in access to fresh fruit and vegetables. We ask that the Government commits to extending the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme to all primary school children at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely:

Sofia Parente, Sustainable Food Places Policy and Campaigns Coordinator, Sustain

James Toop, CEO, Bite Back 2030

Stephanie Slater, Founder and Chief Executive, School Food Matters

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