

SNAG NEWS

Summer 99 The UK Newsletter for School Nutrition Action Groups

HEALTH
EDUCATION
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What is a SNAG? SNAGs, or School Nutrition Action Groups, are school based alliances in which staff, pupils and caterers, supported where appropriate by health and education professionals, work together to review and expand the range of food and drink provided through • the tuck shop • vending machines • the midday meal • catering at social functions • breakfast provision in order to increase the uptake of a healthier diet.

Editorial

The Health Education Trust (SNAG) Newsletter is back – sorry we've been away so long. We were waiting for the Government's initiatives on food in schools to take shape and I guess it all took a bit longer than anyone expected.

However, now that their ideas are out in the open, no-one should complain about being bored. Contained within "Fair Funding", "Ingredients for Success" and "Best Value" are changes, or proposed changes, more radical than anything since the 1980 de-regulation – and perhaps then some! This newsletter contains a number of articles reflecting the hopes, fears and opportunities on offer. I'm particularly pleased to be able to include:

- A summary of the Government position by Deborah Wooley (see page 2)
- An insight into the exciting campaign on free school meals led by the Child Poverty Action Group (see page 5)
- A description of this year's "Focus on Food" initiative, emphasising "whole school" approaches (see page 6).

Please take this opportunity to register your interest in this year's National Conference "Food in Schools" which will take place in late autumn. It will be the best possible platform for debate on the Government's proposals and will bring together key players from health, education, industry and politics. A pro-forma flyer is inside this newsletter, please fill it in and return it to us. Regional seminars will follow early in the year 2000 to enable "local" dissemination.

This is not a time for the faint hearted or the pessimistic. Many of us have fought long and hard for change and urged the Government to

take the lead. Now it has, it is vital that we all give maximum support in shaping the new direction for the benefits of young people. Whatever else is in doubt one thing is crystal clear – under "Fair Funding" schools will have hugely increased control over their food service. With increased authority goes increased responsibility – no more ones from headteachers/governors of "We know it's awful but what can we do?".

In the past six months the world of school food has been thrown into a state of flux. "Fair Funding" is enacted but its full effects are yet to be realised. Ingredients for Success attracted huge interest and a massive response during its consultation period but will need considerable redrafting to give the necessary framework for the quality food service our children deserve.

I understand that during June the Government will publish its draft regulation for consultation. The time-table is tight as it is expected the final version will need to go to Parliament for ratification in September this year. So take every opportunity to influence the future. The exciting news is that the summary of responses to the "Ingredients for Success" document shows that every one replying said that a school based policy on food and nutrition linking what is taught to what is served should be seen as essential in the new guidance! We have always said that "Whole school approaches" demonstrate sound educational practice and offer the best chance of a quality food service for our children and commercial success for the caterers.

School Nutrition Action Groups are the way forward – Now it's official.

The Health Education Trust is the managing organisation for SNAG News and runs the help and advice line service for those with concerns about food in schools across the UK. The newsletters are sent to a targeted 15,000 people in health, education, catering and politics but many thousands more read them. The advice line offers guidance and encouragement to a very broad range of callers, from large contract caterers to concerned parents. The underlying message is always the same: children need and are entitled to a healthy, high quality food service at school and there are always ways each of us can help progress towards achieving that for them.

Joe Harvey
Director Health Education Trust





Ingredients for Success

Proposals for national nutritional standards

Deborah Wooley (DFEE) on progress so far



Ingredients for Success

- set out the Government's proposals for minimum nutritional standards for school lunches
- explained the new duty to provide a paid meals service
- encouraged schools to adopt a whole-school approach to food and nutrition.

The Government wants to see a good quality school meals service which meets the approval of both pupils and their parents. With this in mind, national nutritional standards are being designed which give all pupils the chance to have a nutritious and enjoyable school lunch, building on the existing good practice in many schools and LEAs.

Ingredients for Success proposes that national nutritional standards should be based on the four main food groups which make up a healthy diet, that is:

- fruit and vegetables
- starchy foods (bread, rice, potatoes etc)
- meat, fish or alternatives
- milk and dairy products.

National nutritional standards will not ban particular foods from school lunches.

Pupils under the age of five: Nursery schools and nursery units will not have to provide lunches. If they do, then the Government suggests that they should offer at least one item from each of the following food groups every day:

- meat, fish or alternatives
- vegetables or salad or fruit
- starchy foods - such as bread, potatoes, rice and pasta
- milk and dairy products.

Lunches for pupils aged five and over in primary schools: The Government's preferred option is to specify what types of foods every school lunch should contain. As an illustration, standards might specify that each lunch had to contain a portion of vegetables weighing X grams, a portion of meat or fish weighing Y grams and so on.

Lunches in secondary schools: The Government's preferred option for secondary schools is that they would have to offer every day and throughout the lunch service at least one item from each of the four main food groups, for example:

- a carbohydrate item which was not chips or other fried potatoes
- at least one vegetable or portion of salad
- fruit or fruit juice
- a protein item
- reduced-fat dairy products, for example drinking milk, yogurt.

Students could choose any item or combination of items, although a balanced choice would be available to all children.

There will be a new duty to provide paid lunches for pupils aged five and above and full-time pupils below compulsory school age, if there is a demand. A paid lunch service can also be provided for part-time pupils under the age of five.

The consultation paper supports a whole school approach to food and nutrition and school food committees, involving caterers, pupils and parents.

The Government will also be issuing practical guidance on preparation and cooking methods, monitoring and drawing up and implementing a school food policy.

Time-table

The standards should be finalised by Autumn 1999, giving LEAs and schools time to work towards them before they are legally binding. All LEAs and schools will need to be providing food to the national standards by May 2000.

For further details

The DFEE will be drawing up a draft of the nutritional standards and consulting interested parties on these in the Spring. If you would like to be included in the consultation, please contact:
Mrs Gill Neville
Pupil Support and Independent Schools Division
Department for Education and Employment
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT
Telephone 0171 925 6070
Fax 0171 925 6968
Email: nutritionalstandards@dfee.gov.uk

Delegation of funding and responsibility for school lunches

The Government plans to give more schools the responsibility for providing lunches by delegating funding and transferring various duties from LEAs to the governing bodies of the schools they maintain.

From 1 April 1999

- former grant-maintained schools will continue to receive their own funding for lunches.
- LEAs will have to delegate funding for school lunches to other secondary schools not covered by existing contracts (including DSO agreements) on that date.

From 1 April 2000

- funding for school meals will have to be delegated to other secondary schools
- individual primary and special schools will be able to opt for delegation of funds. Otherwise LEAs will be able to retain funds for the primary and special sectors. Former grant-maintained primary and special schools will be able to opt in to central funding.

The LEA or school governing body with the budget for lunches will also have to:

- set the standard of service it wants to see and select a supplier;
- make sure that free lunches are provided to eligible pupils and that lunches are available for other pupils to buy, if there is a demand;
- for paid meals, make sure that the same price is charged for the same quantity of the same item across the LEA (where it has not delegated responsibility for paid school lunches) or within the school (where responsibility for paid school lunches has been delegated);
- make sure that the national nutritional standards are met.

School governing bodies with a delegated budget for lunches will be able to buy back into the LEA's arrangements, if they wish.

For further details

Mr John Hall
School and LEA Funding Division
Department for Education and Employment
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT
Telephone 0171 925 6422
Fax 0171 925 5852
Email: lea_funding_consultation@dfee.gov.uk

Ten years of apple day and more school orchards

SNAG

October 21st 1999 will be the 10th Apple Day and since the first event in London in 1990, each year more and more groups and individuals have organised their own local celebrations.

Last year over 300 Apple Day events were held, but this figure does not include the hundreds of schools which were treated to apple based school meals on Apple Day or were offered fruit trees for their grounds by their local authority. At the Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School in Suffolk an apple cookery competition was held with the food produced auctioned off to parents at the end of the day to raise funds for the school. The staff and pupils also planted an apple tree in the school grounds, organised lunchtime apple games and have started work on an apple map of the village. These are just some of the activities which have been devised for Apple Day. It is an ideal and enjoyable way to encourage healthy eating and teach basic cookery skills as well as showing children where their food comes from.

Many schools are now setting aside a part of their grounds to plant an orchard, seeing it not only as an outdoor classroom which can be used in almost every area of the curriculum, but also as an enjoyable place to be and a focus for community celebrations. All Saints School in Leicestershire inspired by their Apple Day celebrations and with help from the National Forest have planted fruit trees in the school grounds. Some schools are fortunate already to have orchards. La Sainte Union school in London has recently received funding to restore its old orchard using the necessary management work as an opportunity to teach pupils horticultural skills. Other activities in the orchard are being linked to English, History and Biology while staff and pupils will be able to enjoy sitting beneath the blossom in Spring and tasting the fruit in the Autumn.

Over the next three years Common Ground aims to extend its work on orchards. With part funding from the DETR, we have appointed Dan Kaech as Community Orchards Officer. In addition to supporting and encouraging community groups wishing to create Community Orchards, he is working with schools encouraging the planting of new orchards and the use of existing orchards within the curriculum.

Common Ground have produced a number of publications giving information and ideas on Apple Day and Community Orchards.

For details send an A5 SAE to:

Common Ground
PO Box 25309
London NW5 1ZA

Learning Through Landscapes with help from Common Ground have produced a School Orchards Pack which includes a range of activities from choosing and planting trees to using the orchard and fruit throughout the primary curriculum.

Details from:

Learning Through Landscapes
3rd Floor
Southside Offices
The Law Courts
Winchester
Hants SO23 9DL



School meals The Meat and Livestock Commission's approach to nutrition and recipe development

Jennette Higgs, Senior Nutritionist

The Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) has long been committed to the school sector and works hard both to assess and improve the quality, service and choice of meals on offer in schools. MLC is well placed to advise on all aspects of the school meal service, especially in key areas such as nutritional balance, and product quality and assurance.

Quality

All meat should be of a high quality and fully trimmed to ensure optimum leanness. For example, fully trimmed beef now contains only 5% fat, lamb contains 8% fat and pork only 4% fat. British Meat Quality Standard Marks for minced beef, beefburgers and pork offer assurance about food safety, animal welfare and product quality.

Research and development

MLC's development team regularly researches children's likes and dislikes in order to devise new recipes and product concepts for school meals. Recipes for exotic or spicy dishes are now becoming mainstream options on school menus and MLC is at the forefront of creating these appealing and innovative new choices that meet the agreed nutritional requirements.

Nutrition

MLC's Nutrition and Dietetic Department nutritionally analyse school recipes to ensure that they meet the appropriate criteria regarding proportional fat content to ensure that they do not provide more than 35% of the energy from fat when eaten as part of a balanced meal when accompanied with the serving suggestions.

Balance

A balanced meal is essential and it is important that the meat in any school meal is accompanied by large portions of potatoes, rice, pasta, noodles or bread and also vegetables. In this way, the nutritional balance of the meal is maintained such as is advocated in the pictorial model for nutrition education developed by the MLC which is entitled "Getting the Balance Right".

By the use of this approach the "Food-based nutritional standards" recommended in *Ingredients for Success* (Department for Education and Employment, 1998) and *Towards a Healthier Scotland* (Scottish Office, 1999) are achieved. The approach of a balanced diet is at the heart of any advice on diet from the MLC and provides a focus for the provision of any nutritional information.

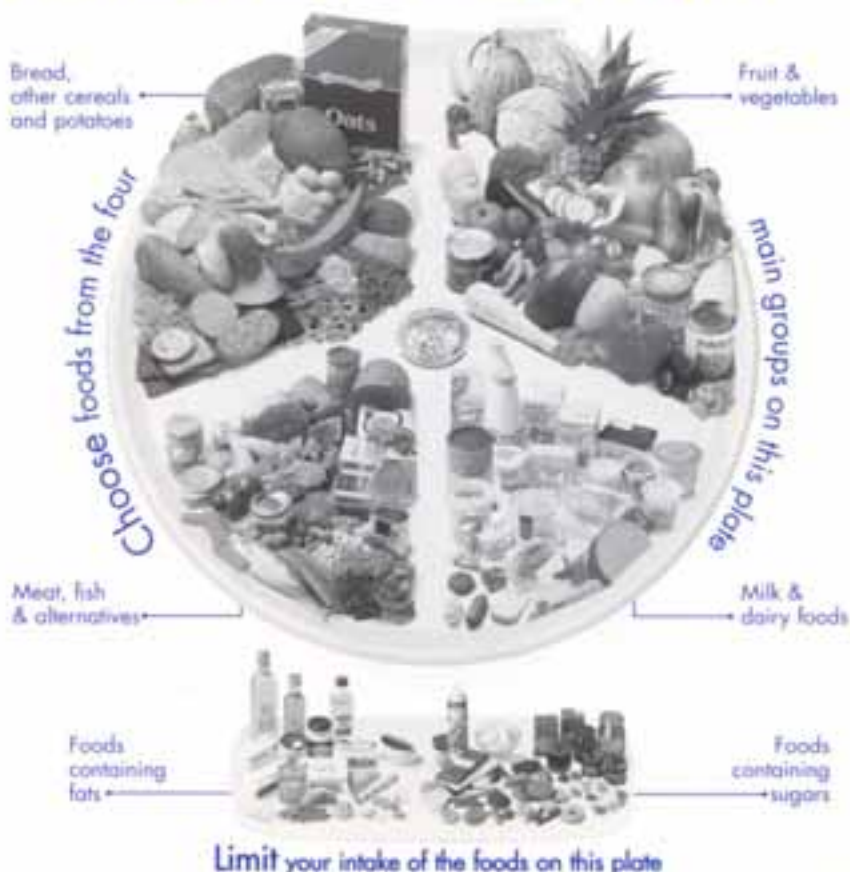
Meat is not only a favourite ingredient on school menus but is also an important source of vital nutrients. The iron found in red meat is in the haem form which means that it can be absorbed into the bloodstream more easily than non-haem iron. Red meat will also provide a full range of B vitamins including vitamin B₁₂, a nutrient often lacking in vegetarian and vegan diets. Selenium, Zinc and vitamin D are also in abundance in red meat.

The MLC therefore acknowledges SNAG as a highly effective mechanism and fully supports its work in promoting balance as an important component of the school meal.

Further information on Getting the balance right can be obtained from the Nutrition and Dietetic Department of the MLC.

PO Box 44
Winterhill House
Snowdon Drive
Milton Keynes MK9 1AX
Telephone 011008 244106.

Getting the balance right



Free school meals for children who need them

SNAG

According to the most widely accepted definition there are about 2.8 million school children living in poverty in the UK. Yet only around 1.8 million children have entitlement to a free school meal. So there are one million school children living in poverty who do not have entitlement to free school meals.

A writer of academic research points to the social, nutritional and economic benefits of children from poor backgrounds getting a meal at school. Research as recent as 1999 indicates that up to 10% of children are deterred from buying school meals by the cost.

There is, then, a clear case for the Government to extend entitlement of free school meals to all children who are living in poverty. Such a step would allow the Government to address one of its most key concerns: the eradication of the scourge of child poverty.

Can we afford not to?

In early 1999, the Government outlined the costs of extending free school meal provision. Extending provision to all school aged children would cost £1.8 billion and to primary school children £1 billion.

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is calling for the Government to give free school meals to all school aged children whose parents receive the new tax credits. It would cost the Government £410 million (or £210 million for school children under 11). Such a measure would affect around half of the one million poor children not receiving free school meals.

Alternatively, the Government could carry out research and identify the best way to help the one million children living in poverty who are not entitled to a free school meal. This would help to address a major concern of the recently published Acheson Report *Inequalities in Health*, is the lack of concrete information about food poverty.

All children should get the free school meals to which they are entitled. Over one third of a million children, one in five, do not get the free school meals to which they are entitled. For many this means missing out on their main hot meal of the day as one in four children in the UK do not get a hot dinner in the evening.

In some areas the rate of take-up is much worse. In some London Boroughs over one third of those secondary school children entitled, miss their free school meal. Secondary schools in the north east of England also show rates of non-take up as high as 40%. Independent research carried out in Scotland, shows that in some term weeks almost a third of primary school children are not taking up their entitlement.

That some children who live in poverty are not eating such an essential meal should be of concern to us all.

Stigma

Research shows that there are a number of reasons for the non-take up of free school meals. One important reason is social stigma.

In some schools there are separate queues for children receiving free school meals; others can be made to wait until 'paying' children have received their school dinner. In schools with cash canteenas 'cashless' children are easy to identify.

Surely, it is more than possible for schools to make such provision without publicly identifying children in receipt of the benefit. Such stigma should no longer be allowed to exist in schools.

Children who are absent from school due to sickness or school exclusion also account for the high level of non-take up. This is an extra cost to low income parents. Some parents on income support simply fail to register for the service. Yet, according to the most recent research, benefits only cover 80% of the barest minimum budget.

The complex debate about school meal funding should not cloud the fact that take-up is unacceptably low across the UK. An urgent campaign, led and funded by Government and implemented by local authorities, is needed to ensure that children who are entitled to free school meals should get them and that the stigma around provision is removed.

Statutory nutrient based standards for school meals

The work on nutritional standards has already been done. The Caroline Walker Trust, the universally recognised experts in the UK, have published *Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals* which provide figures for the recommended nutrient content of an average school meal provided for children over a one week period; the Government should make these guidelines statutory.

The most comprehensive study of school children's diets, the 1989 government report *The Diets of British Schoolchildren*, concluded that young people depend for

a significant proportion of their total intake of energy on three foods: chips, cakes and biscuits at the expense of more nutritious foods.

Currently, children's diets are too high in sugar and fat and too low in fibre, some vitamins and minerals. Children from low income families have particularly low intakes of folate and vitamins A and C. Put simply, children need to eat more fruit and vegetables as recommended in the government commissioned Acheson Report *Inequalities in Health*.

Children are subject to enormous commercial and peer pressure to consume foods that are high in fat and sugar. Recent surveys of school meals show pizza and chips are still the most popular choices.

Numerous studies show that under-nutrition's effects are often invisible. But even before they become severe and readily detectable, they have limited a child's ability to understand the world around them. The body first uses energy to maintain critical organ functions; then growth and last for social activity and cognitive development.

These dietary deficiencies can affect short-term health, increasing the risk of dental problems, anaemia, obesity and general weight gain. In the longer term, the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, some cancers and diabetes may increase. The eating habits learned in childhood so often transfer into adulthood.

Support CPAG Campaign - see enclosed leaflet

Money invested in children's nutrition now, will lead to savings in health and social care budgets both now and later. School meals make an important contribution to the daily diets of the UK's children. They contribute between 30%-45% of children's daily energy intake, the higher proportion among low income families.

We Are Calling For:

- The extension of entitlement to free school meals to all families receiving the new tax credits
- The maximisation of the take up of free school meals
- The introduction of minimum nutritional standards for school meals and the development of nutritional education in schools.



Focus on food

Almost a year after the launch of the RSA's 5 year national education initiative, called Focus on Food, the Director, Anita Cornac, reports on the Campaign's progress and some of the findings from the first survey of the scheme's participating schools.

The RSA is The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce whose main fields of interest are business and industry, design and technology, education, the arts and the environment.

Focus on Food was launched in June 1998 against a background of increasing evidence that fewer young people today are confident, knowledgeable and able to select, make and cook food competently. The Campaign seeks to redress a shortfall in young people's general education, with teacher education and a research and curriculum development programme for primary and secondary schools. The work focuses on the making and cooking of food as the key experience in learning about the social issues and the importance of food in everyone's lives. The aim of Focus on Food is long term. It is to raise the profile of practical food education and to secure its position in the National Curriculum.

Central to delivery of the Campaign's work is the Cooking Bus, a 'culinary juggernaut' which turns into a colourful and shiny 'state of the art' mobile kitchen. It is a fully equipped food classroom for 15 teachers or half classes of pupils and it visits schools and colleges throughout the country. With an Advisory Teacher and Food Technician on board, the Cooking Bus Team undertakes curriculum development, provides practical skill-based in-service training and also helps colleagues to plan and develop food education in their schools.

Primary and Secondary schools register to join the Campaign and in return receive Focus on Food's teaching and learning support materials to use during Focus on Food Week and throughout the school year.

One thousand schools will be eligible to take part in this year's Focus on Food

Week between 21-25 June. This nationwide practical celebration of making, cooking and sharing food in schools takes place annually. The supporting materials (different each year) are sent free of charge to Campaign schools, on condition that they contribute to Focus on Food's research programme. Based at the University of Reading, the hub of the 3 year research programme is to determine the effect of sustained planned practical food education in the curriculum, on pupils' skills, attitudes to food and learning in a range of school subjects.

Feedback from Focus on Food schools provides the Campaign with a range of useful data which helps build a picture of current food education in schools. Teachers' views and opinions are valued and help to inform and shape the development of the scheme, including the content and focus of future teaching and learning materials.

Feedback from 1998 Focus on Food schools revealed teachers' approval for the Campaign's practical approach of 'learning through making'. Furthermore, teachers recognised that the themes and units of work in Focus on Food's support materials reflect contemporary eating habits and start from children's own experience. They do not emphasise a lost 'golden age' of domestic life which may have little or no relevance in today's lifestyles. The projects allow children to express their own tastes and ideas, widening their understanding of others' tastes, ideas and current food issues.

Eating together, a key feature in Focus on Food activities, was seen of immense importance and much valued by primary and secondary teachers alike. So too were the themes and units of work which featured principles of healthy eating and opportunities to teach or reinforce learning about nutrition. Many teachers said that the kinds of food pupils brought home from school or purchased on the way to school, was of major concern. It was often high fat, high sugar and high salt foodstuffs, typically fizzy drinks, crisps, cakes/pastries and chocolates.

These teachers cited an apparent discrepancy between what pupils were often taught in class about healthy eating and their actual eating patterns during the school day including snacks, choices available, school made meals and their packed lunches.

In response to these observations, Focus on Food Week 1999 and the new 1999 Focus on Food support materials will concentrate on helping schools to promote a consistent message matched with practice, in the taught curriculum, school food service provision and the pupils pastoral care and welfare policy.

Registered Focus on Food Schools will be encouraged to adopt a 'Whole School Approach to food and nutrition and actively examine all aspects of food service and the curriculum thus ensuring a consistent philosophy and matching practice.

Want to get involved?

To join Focus on Food, schools should contact Lucy Burns to receive information about Focus on Food and how to Register your school for the scheme.

Focus on Food
The RSA at Dean Clough
Dean Clough
Heilix
HX3 5AX
Telephone 01422 383191
Fax 01422 341148
Email linda@design-dimension.co.uk



A Whole School Approach

Torquay Boys' Grammar School

SNAG

Torquay Boys' Grammar School is a state school of 972 pupils aged 10 to 18 years. Its recent OFSTED inspection identified it as a "very good school with excellent features" and included reference to healthy eating.

One of the reasons for its success is the belief in practical and meaningful involvement of all its stakeholders, particularly the provision of realistic opportunities for students to co-plan their own educational experiences. Through the School Council, there is no better evidence of such involvement than in the area of food and nutrition. The School's caterers, Devon Direct Service (DDS), have over time made regular visits to Council to answer questions about the provision, quality and variety of food. As a result of one visit, a questionnaire was composed to establish just what students' views were as regards food provision at school. A School Council working party collected and collated relevant market research material. All tutor groups responded, resulting in changes in the type of food on offer, vending machines to quicken service, separate sixth form facilities and the introduction of a breakfast service.

The results of the questionnaire were brought to the Personal Committee of Governors by Council representatives and SNAG was born.

School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG)

The objectives and structure of SNAG resulted from recommendations contained in a detailed report from a Working Party. The membership of SNAG reflects the essential "whole-school approach" containing students, parents, staff, governors, School Nurse, Community Dietician and DDS staff. The inaugural meeting took place on 10th March 1997 and two sub-groups were created:

- 1 Curriculum, nutrition and menu
- 2 Finance presentation and accommodation.

Nutrition and the Curriculum

The School has its own food policy statement which underpins all that SNAG is determined to achieve and uses the curriculum to reinforce the essential messages about food and nutrition. Much progress has been made in making healthy eating an attractive and laudable concept for young people especially at the lower end of the school where hopefully, bad habits have not taken a firm foothold. The Cookery Club is now up and running and visits to the catering section of the local FE College for practical demonstrations are scheduled for the Summer term. Links with a major food supermarket are being forged.

A research project, in conjunction with Plymouth University, looking into the relationship between diet and abnormal tiredness is ongoing.

Healthy Meal Provision

The catering questionnaires sought to establish which products to supply regularly and which menu items were perceived as healthy. This feedback was the basis of an extra-ordinary SNAG meeting held in June 1997 to formulate menus for breakfasts, break and lunchtimes. The outcome, after much bargaining, was slimmer menus reflecting students' preferences as well as attempting, through price differentiation, to encourage healthier choices. Emphasis is placed upon nutritional balance (jamley faces or otherwise!)

Promotional Activities.

The Schools' commitment to promoting healthy eating is evidenced in articles that have appeared in our annual newspaper and newsletters. The May 1997 School Meals Week events were energetically supported. In September 1997 Joe Harvey, Director of the Health Education Trust, visited the School to run workshops for all of Year 7 to meet with SNAG, and later to address the new intake parents. In November 1997 most of the School was involved in a Sports Challenge Day with Trevor Brooking as special guest and promoter. Sport and a healthy diet was one of the themes.

Food tasting sessions are being organised for both pupils and parents, and a food cross-curricular field study day will occupy Year 7 in July.

The Caterer's Perspective

There has been a substantial growth of nutritionally balanced/healthy meals which now account for 25% of all sales and overall increase in turnover approaching 40%.

Hygiene, Health and Safety

DDS work closely with the School to ensure all relevant Health and Safety Aspects are adhered to. This is achieved by regular monitoring visits by the area management team and meetings to discuss ongoing issues.

Environmental Health Inspectors are invited onto site to give guidance. The Bay Award (formerly the Heartbeat Award) for displaying good hygienic practices and providing healthy choices on the menu was gained by the School in April 1998.

Achievements and Future Plans

Further achievements demonstrating whole school involvement are:

- Additional Powercard/cash machines for improved service
- Water chiller funded by School Council
- Multi-product refrigerated vending machine providing 24 hour service of healthy options.
- Regular feedback from pupils via questionnaires and School Council
- Video on food issues made by pupil volunteers.

Postscript

The School has been awarded "Beacon School" status and among other activities runs seminar days to illustrate the "Whole-School" approach to "Food and Nutrition".

For further information write to:
SNAG

Torquay Boys' Grammar School
Shiphay Manor Drive
Torquay TQ2 7EL.

News

Food in Schools

The Food in Schools project was set up by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (now the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) to explore ways in which schools could develop work with food. This was done in order to improve pupils' experiences and enhance ways of encouraging pupils to enjoy and appreciate food, while teaching them about its social and communal importance.

Food in Schools: Ideas provides background information on the key themes that emerged in the project, and gives examples of different approaches that schools have used. It is intended to provide a range of ideas that can be developed and adapted to fit the particular circumstances of a school or college and its community.

Food in Schools: Planning a Project aims to simplify and speed up the planning process by sharing the experiences of the schools. It looks at some fundamental issues in planning and provides checklists and sample letters that may be useful.

Food in Schools: A Recipe for the Future is a leaflet intended for food experts outside the school who might be interested in working with a local school or college on food. It gives examples of successful work and advice on how to approach schools.

Copies of the booklets were sent to all primary and secondary schools in England in November 1997.

The booklets and leaflet can be obtained from: QCA Publications, PO Box 99, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6DN, Tel: 01787 884444, Fax: 01787 312950

Food in Schools: Ideas QCA/97/046 - £5

Food in Schools: Planning a Project QCA/97/047 - £2

Food in Schools: A Recipe for the Future QCA/98/053 - Free

Birmingham project goes 'city wide'

The Birmingham School Nutrition Action Group project is now completed as a 'special' project and the evaluation report is available. The project was very successful in motivating pupils to become involved in their school and in particular the food provision. Schools with Groups showed a positive change in attitudes and a change in the pattern of food purchased.

The project has now gone 'mainstream' and it is the remit of all catering managers to run pupil groups in their secondary schools.

The next phase is to adopt the model for primary schools and work will start on this in April.

For an order form for the Birmingham SNAG Evaluation Report or for further details on the project please contact: Sandra Passmore, Health Education Unit, Birmingham City Council, B32 3EH, Telephone 0121 303 8200, Email healthed@birmingham.gov.uk

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SNAG Network

**Join the SNAGs Network
(Free of Charge)**

The School Nutrition Action Group (SNAGs) concept is a policy tool designed to help teachers, caterers, school managers, parents and children to work together in improving the provision of healthy food and nutrition education in schools.

Further copies of the SNAGs guide are available at £6.00 (inc. P&P) each.

SNAGs Advice Line offers:

Membership of SNAGs Network and inclusion on our mailing list for SNAG news. Further information on a range of services available to individuals and organisations and workshops from experienced health education and dietetic consultants.

Free telephone advice on all issues to do with food policy development in schools.

Please telephone for advice on all issues to do with food policy development in schools.

Please telephone or fax the SNAGs Advice Line on 01789 773915 or write to: SNAGs, c/o Health Education Trust, 18 High Street, Broom, Alcester, Warks. B50 4HU for more information.

Guidance Notes for contributors:

Now one and all, large and small - I'm ready for your contributions, complaints and concerns for the next issue to be published in late summer 1999.

- 1 Please supply Articles: 200/250 words
- 2 A typed hard copy with name, title, address, tel/fax numbers as appropriate.
- 3 A copy on disk (Wordperfect, Word or ASCII format).

For the disk copy please keep material in basic type face and avoid bold or underlining to save editing time this end, if you want your disk returned please print your name and address on it.

Please send all articles to:

Joe Harvey, The Health Education Trust, 18 High Street, Broom, Alcester, Warks, B50 4HU, Telephone or Fax: 01789 773915

