

National School Meals Week Media Report

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Section 1

National Television



06.11.13

LACA Chair Anne Bull was a guest on BB2's Daily Politics show. She was given a 2m30s 'soap box' segment and appeared in the studio alongside senior MPs afterwards to part in a discussion.

"School food today is made with fresh, healthy ingredients and is by far the best option"

"Headteachers tell us, that performance, behaviour and concentration all improve when children have a nutritionally balanced hot meal."

"At the moment academies and free schools and those outside local authority control don't have to apply the Government's nutritional standards. This has got to change and 92% of parents agree".



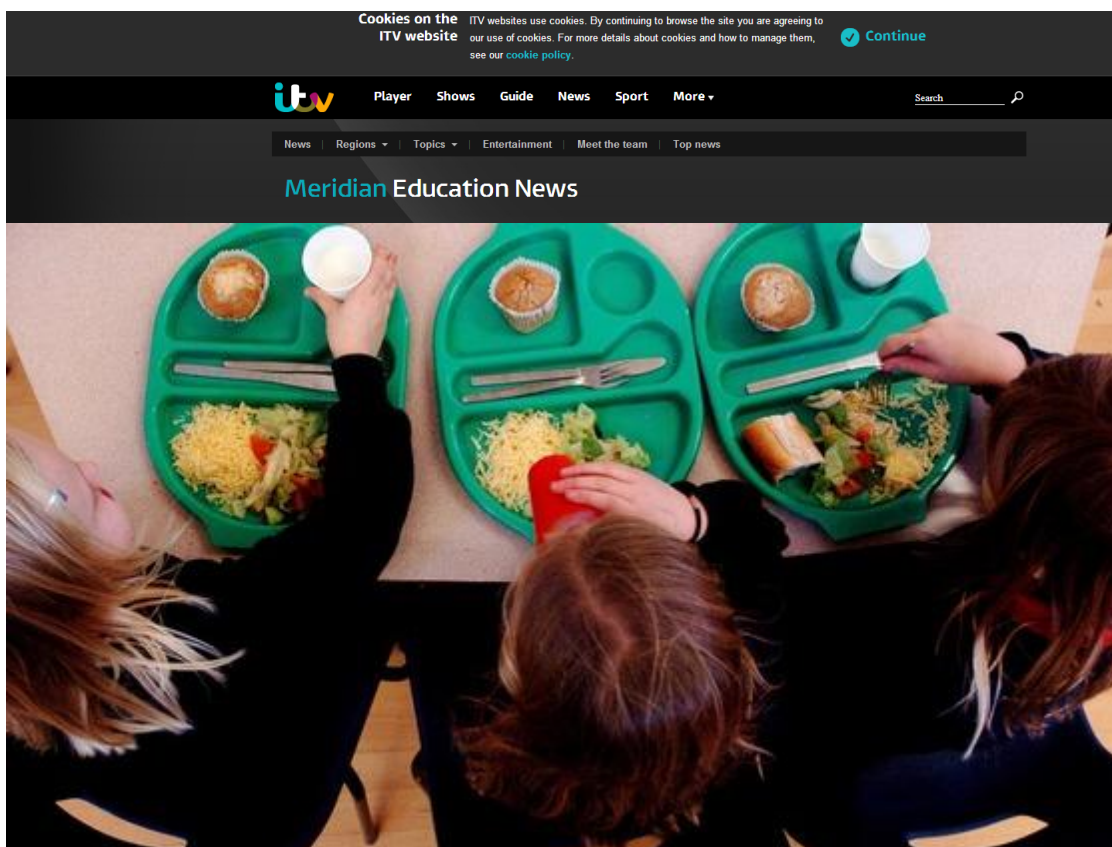
Jo Coburn "The biggest problem is image isn't it... everyone remembers those dreaded words semolina, turkey twizzlers etc, is that still a big issue?"

Anne Bull "I think we have moved on from there... the image of good school food is really important, this week is national school meals week and it gives us a chance to showcase what is good about school food."



Section 2

Regional Television



04.11.13

Children are being urged to try school meals Credit: Press Association Images

Kent County Council is calling on all parents to encourage their children to try a school lunch for a day as part of National School Meals Week. Thanks to campaigns like Jamie Oliver's to improve the quality of food, the council says school lunches are the best they have ever been.

For less than a cup of coffee on the high street, the council says a child can get a nourishing, tasty meal. Some of the meals on offer include, roast turkey with stuffing and roast potatoes, sweet and sour chicken with rice, pasta bolognese with homemade garlic bread and delicious desserts.

Roger Gough, cabinet member for education, said: 'I am sure my own experience of school dinners is very different to how it is today. If a child eats a healthy balanced main meal at lunchtime they are better able to concentrate for the rest of the day.'



Section 3

National Newspapers



03.11.13 - Stephen Mosley MP

There is no better way of ensuring children are fit to learn than healthy school meals

Children on free school meals make healthier choices to those who pay for their dinner. It happens because they make up for poor home grub, but still have a diet that is “lacking”, a study found.

But it is the junk food they eat the rest of the time which prevents them becoming healthier than pupils from wealthier families.

Research by Sheffield University could provide school dinners campaigners with new ammunition in the war against childhood obesity.

Published in Public Health Nutrition, it shows secondary pupils shun the ranges of freshly prepared hot meals provided by most schools in favour of grabbing sandwiches and pizza.

However, the research involving 2,660 pupils from two large Yorkshire secondary schools, also found children entitled to free food were more likely to pick nutritionally valuable freshly prepared dishes of the day.

Experts say the Free School Meals (FSM) programme, catering for children from low-income families, is vital to the diet of poorer youngsters who in these straightened times have even less guarantee of nutritious food at home.

In the UK, obesity has reached record levels with 28 per cent of girls and 31 per cent of boys aged between two-15 years being classified as obese or overweight.

Lead author Dr Hannah Ensaff, from the University’s Department of Oncology, said: “Eating behaviour is learnt early on and food preferences established in childhood and adolescence tend to persist into adult life, with related consequences for long-term health.

“Healthy eating habits are crucial to reducing children’s risk of health problems, both long and short-term.

“The school food environment is an obvious public health intervention, particularly as children today seem to rely more on school food than decades ago.”

Over recent years, food and nutrient standards have soared in school menus with bans on high fat and sugar sources such as sweets, crisps and fizzy drinks.

But the new findings highlight a huge difference between what is on the menu and what youngsters are piling on their plates.

It points to a growing need to consider why children choose certain foods and to improve the nutritional value of the dishes they do like.

Dr Margo Barker, Senior Lecturer in Nutritional Epidemiology, said: “The patterns of food choice of students receiving free school meals with those that pay for them are of particular interest.

“Students receiving free school meals made nutritionally superior choices in the school canteen, although surveys show that their overall diet is lacking.

“This anomaly seems to be evidence for those calling for policy to extend free school meals beyond those families of lowest income.”

05.11.13

PARLIAMENTARY BACKED INITIATIVE ENCOURAGES HEALTHY EATING IN SCHOOLS

Parliamentary backed school-lunch initiative launched to encourage healthier eating in schools

- Over 450,000 children will be offered a free meals this week to celebrate the Great School Lunch as part of the 20th annual National School Meals Week
- Week backed by the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food and follows Nick Clegg's announcement of £600 million in September to introduce free school meals for all 5 to 7 year olds in England
- Study released today shows over 90% of parents want nutritional standards applied to all schools
- And more than 85% of want more information on the ingredients used in school meals in the light of recent food scares

Over 450,000 children will be offered a free two course meal this week to celebrate the Great School Lunch as part of the 20th annual National School Meals Week.

National School Meals Week is the biggest healthy eating awareness week aimed at children in England & Wales. The event is organised by LACA, the lead association for catering in education, who work with schools to promote healthy school meals in primary and secondary schools, colleges and academies.

The week is backed by the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food and hundreds of schools across the country will be taking part. The great school lunch is this year's initiative to get as many pupils in England and Wales to try school food rather than bring a lunch box from home.

School meals have become a major political issue with the publication of the Department for Education's School Food Plan in July and Nick Clegg's announcement of £600 million in September to introduce free school meals for all 5 to 7 year olds in England. Many local authorities, such as Islington and Southwark, have already introduced free school meals for primary age students.

The School Food Plan found many parents mistakenly imagine that a packed lunch is the healthiest option but only 1% of packed lunches actually meet the nutritional standards that currently apply to school food.

And new research by ParentPay released today by found that 90% of parents are satisfied with school meals on offer, however 93% of parents would like to see nutritional standards applied to all schools regardless of type, 86% of parents want more information on the ingredients used in school meals in the light of recent food scares and 56.3% want better information about food and good health.

Amongst the initiatives being undertaken during National School Meals Week: Newcastle United and Sunderland players will be visiting schools to promote healthy eating; Lancashire School Catering Service will be serving up a roast chicken dinner to 73,000 primary school children; Spotland Primary School in Rochdale will be hosting a Mexican Day; Leeds City Council is running a school food competition for primary schools in the city; Birmingham City Council is offering a themed meal in all its 300 primary schools; Wrexham Borough Council is offering all primary school pupils a free lunch on Thursday 7 November.



Section 4

Regional Newspapers

08.11.13

There was more on the menu than just dinner for Fylde coast schoolchildren when footballers paid them a visit to celebrate healthy lifestyles.

Players from Blackpool FC and Fleetwood Town FC visited schools in Marton and Poulton as part of a National School Dinners Week celebration yesterday.

The initiative offered children across the Fylde a free school meal as a taster in a bid to encourage families to take up hot, nutritious meals for children in school each day.

Sandra Harvey, operations manager for Blackpool Council, said: "It's about trying to promote healthy eating, a school meal is balanced, healthy and served hot, it boosts their energy through the afternoon."

Blackpool FC players Matt Gilks and Adam Dodd visited St Nicholas CE Primary School, on School Road, Marton, for a question time with Year Five pupils yesterday.

And Fleetwood Town defender Nathan Pond visited Poulton CE Primary School, on Hardhorn Road, yesterday afternoon to talk about healthy lifestyles after all the school enjoyed a free school dinner together, along with the Mayor of Wyre, Coun John Hodgkinson.

Headteacher Peter Hyland said: "If children get a really good, tasty, nutritional lunch it's at the right time of the day for energy.

"The day was a nice occasion and strengthened when Nathan Pond came in to explore how you can keep healthy."

Mr Pond added: "It is really important to children's wellbeing that they have a healthy and nutritious diet as well exercise regularly."

The school lunch initiative also saw kitchen staff have a 'master class' session run by the workforce development team to refresh their skills.

Schools will now see a new menu for lunches, to include favourites such as roast beef, meat and potato pie and spaghetti bolognese.

Healthy food is at pupils' fingertips

STATE-of-the-art fingerprint technology is helping to keep pupils at Churchfields Academy on-site and away from fast food outlets at lunchtimes.

As National School Meals Week draws to a close, the Advertiser visited the school for an outlook on how they tackle the issue of teenagers and fast food.

There are machines dotted around the canteen area which allow students to login using fingerprints and then deposit money, which is added to their account and used as they wish in the dining room over the rest of the week.

It is a system which allows parents and teachers to keep tabs on where and how their children are spending their money.

The system is also praised by the school's executive chef and catering manager, Ian Bevan, who said the stigma surrounding free school meals is nullified, with children using nothing more than their finger at the till for each transaction.

"It's a system the parents can keep an eye on," he said.

"They can keep tabs on when the money is deposited and when it is spent. It gives them peace of mind the children are eating the right things.

"No one knows who has got free meals at this place, which helps to reduce the stigma attached to it.

"The meals we have here are only £2 per day, which requires £10 for the week. The machine will stop them at £5 each day too, so it can limit them from overspending."

Ian works for Pabulum, a third-party contractor brought into the school last September, who have shown a dedication to improving the health of students with the introduction of fizzy fruit juices and low-fat desserts.

The caterers also have a presence at [Kingsdown School](#), with whom Ian holds regular meetings to ensure the two groups continue to learn from each other.

Churchfields has almost 900 pupils on its roll and serves 400 hot meals every day, with 220 free school meals given to pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Ian said the face of school catering is changing and it is becoming a professional sector, where chefs will treat a school as a project for improvement.

"Professional chefs are applying for jobs in schools now," he said.

"The idea of one dinner lady serving food to children is fading, there are more professionals and more men entering school kitchens."

"There is a lot of research going into school recipes and menus now. The nutritional balance has to be right for the children."



08.11.13 – Liam Randall

Free meals day is a treat for Wrexham pupils

HUNDREDS of children across Wrexham tucked into a free lunch to celebrate National School Meals Week.

Every primary school pupil across the county was offered the chance to have a free meal yesterday with invites sent out to all parents and carers.

On offer on the day was a choice of Welsh beef pasta bolognese or vegetarian pasta bolognese, accompanied by garlic bread and followed by raspberry and vanilla cookie with milk.

High Sheriff of Clwyd, Celia Jenkins, went along to Barkers Lane School to sample the menu for herself.

She said: “I feel a nutritionally balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle are essential to the development of our children and this initiative is an excellent way of promoting this.

“I was particularly impressed with the quality of today’s meal and with the enthusiasm of the cook Jane Harrison and her team as the children seemed to really enjoy their lunchtime experience.

“I was also pleased with the welcome I received from the children at the school who are very courteous and engaging and I thoroughly enjoyed their company over lunch.”

Steve Jones, from Wrexham Council, said: “We have a very dedicated catering team throughout the schools we serve and there was a real passion from the cooks and catering assistants for us to get involved in National School Meals Week this year.

“I have to thank our suppliers who kindly donated many of the ingredients for today’s promotion and also the Healthy Schools team who, through Appetite for Life funding, also supported this event to ensure costs were kept to a minimum. Finally I would like to thank all the primary school teaching and support staff for their help to facilitate this event and to ensure that we have fed so many of our school children today.”

Wrexham Council’s school meals team said they would like to thank The Little Food Company, Blakemore Foodservice, Tomlinson’s Dairies, Linda McCartney, Giles Foods and Dlarta Frozen Foods for their support with the event.

*Islington***Tribune**

08.11.13 – Charlotte Latimer

Tucking in! Chain boss visits school for National School Meals Week

A FOUNDER of restaurant chain Leon dined on spaghetti bolognese with pupils from a Finsbury Park school on Monday to celebrate National School Meals Week.

Restaurateur John Vincent met Ambler Primary School headteacher Juliet Benis to hear about the school's approach to food.

He was joined by Town Hall children and families chief Councillor Joe Caluori and representatives from The School Food Plan.

"I'm having a lovely lunch, and the kids are enjoying the food," Mr Vincent said.

A report on school meals by Mr Vincent and Leon co-founder Henry Dimbleby, published earlier this year, found that free school meals for all pupils offer a healthy alternative to packed lunches.

Islington primary schools have been offering free school meals since 2010.



08.11.13

Mount Pellon School has been serving up some tasty treats for its pupils, including four-year-old Rimsha Ali (pictured) during National School Meals Week.

The school serves 380 pupils a day and won a bronze Food for Life certificate last year.

Head cook Carol Prior said: "We have a very good take up of school meals although we want to encourage more of our pupils to have a school dinner."

07.11.13

Children across Leeds can put their thinking caps on to design a healthy and fun school lunch – which could be served up across the city.

Leeds City Council's catering team, Catering Leeds, has launched the tasty competition to mark National School Meals Week, which runs this week.

All schools in the city can get involved in the contest which could see one pupil's meal on the menu for all schools catered for by the service.

The children will complete a fun activity sheet to boost their understanding of a great school lunch as they design their meal.

Prizes also include a class trip for 60 children to Stockbridge TechnologyCentre to learn about food production; a cookery demonstration for parents or pupils, and £100 towards equipment to start a 'Growing Club' at school.

Coun Peter Gruen, executive board member responsible for neighbourhoods, planning and support services, said: "The work being done by our catering service to increase the uptake of school meals is fantastic.

"They encourage schools to look beyond lunchtime and include healthy food and nutrition in the whole school day by promoting growing clubs whose produce is then used in the school kitchen."

Coun Judith Blake, executive member for children's services, added: "The competition is a great way for young people to get involved in school meals and gives them the opportunity to have a say over what they would like to see on the menu.

"Nutrition plays a vital role in young people's well-being and how they perform at school.

"I would encourage more pupils to think about having school meals as they really do make such a difference to the school day."

National School meals week is now in its 20th year and aims to encourage children to eat well in school.

Wakefield Council is also supporting the week, with their award-winning caterers Kingswood Catering. Coun Les Shaw, Wakefield Council cabinet member for transformation, said: "We're pleased to support National School Meals week, as having a balance and variety of food and drink is important for children's health and has been shown to boost learning."

The Bolton News

07.11.13 – Saiqa Chadhari

A SCHOOL in Bolton has become the first in the UK to try a new groundbreaking dining experience — which has got youngsters champing at the bit to eat fruit and vegetables.

Children at Kearsley West Primary School have sampled the Food Dudes Dining Experience, which was launched on Monday, as National School Meals' Week got under way.

Rather than being offered broccoli, sweet corn and blueberries, children are asked if they would like to have super special strength, a super brain or super energy, with cartoon characters reinforcing the message.

And to show pupils how well they are doing by eating healthy foods, they can earn points — and points mean prizes.

Inspired by the Food Dudes, the children are asking their parents to pack their lunchboxes with fruit and vegetables.

Anya Dearden, aged 10, a Food Dude Coach, who gives out points in return for children eating their fruit or veg, said: "I have tried new things like mange tout and I go for brain power.

"I like having more fruit and veg to choose from."

Nona Marsden, aged four, added: "I love the Food Dudes. They are really good and dinner time is more exciting and I go for super strength foods. I have tried blue-berries, which I really liked and had not had before."

Headteacher Lesley Cooper said she was delighted with the impact the Food Dudes Dining Experience was having.

Normally popular chocolate muffins were left on the shelf while catering staff could not keep up with the demand for fresh oranges.

Mrs Cooper said: "This is not about preaching, but making our children as healthy as can be and getting them to try different vegetables and fruit. It is the children who are choosing to try the foods.

"They are more likely to choose vegetables if you ask them if they want super strength or a super brain — they are more likely to choose them."

Professor Fergus Lowe, chairman of Food Dudes Health, added: "Branding has been used for foods to encourage children to eat them and we are using branding and cartoon characters to encourage them to eat healthily." Bolton Council bosses say they would like to roll out the scheme to other schools in the borough.

Versions of the scheme will be introduced at Bolton Parish Church School, St Gregory's RC Primary School, Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Sunning Hill Primary School and The Valley Community School over the coming months

CATERERS at Eldene Primary School are improving the experience for pupils receiving school dinners, with training from Jamie Oliver's own inspiration.

Catering manager Dean Fry and business manager Samantha Wells have been involved with the Food for Life Partnership and a programme co-ordinated by Swindon Council which puts staff in front of Jeanette Orrey, the dinner lady behind Oliver's national campaign.

The pair have attended four sessions with Jeanette at Swindon Academy, with one more to come. The sessions revolve around improving the quality of food offered in school kitchens and how to increase their uptake.

The training is all part of an ongoing drive at Eldene to expand its school meals operation and improve what is on offer to the 80 children eating free school dinners. The school says that, for many, it is their only cooked meal of the day because they come from poorer backgrounds.

This week is National School Meals Week, with schools across the nation hoping to provide one free meal before the weekend, with an aim of signing more parents up long-term.

Dean said: "We serve around 80 free school meals here each day and [for many] this is their only hot meal of the day.

"There is a stigma surrounding children and their parents claiming free school meals, so there may well be more children out there eligible, who aren't claiming."

The school charges £2 per meal per day and has recently increased the uptake of hot dinners, with more than 50 per cent of all lunches eaten at the school each week cooked in the kitchen.

Further expansion planned – as a part of the Food for Life partnership, a national initiative, the school is working towards a bronze award, which celebrates a whole school approach to food, as opposed to simply serving food for one hour each day.

On the training with Jeanette Orrey, Samantha Wells said: "It's been very helpful and great to talk to other catering managers from around Swindon and find out what they are doing in their schools.

"Jeanette is very knowledgeable and has told us how we should look to bring in changes.

"There is a significant focus on the dining room experience for the pupils, beyond the food."

One of the enterprising ideas from catering manager Dean has been to change the kitchen's status to a children's restaurant, which pupils are voting on a name for.

"We have asked the children to name our restaurant. That's the way we run it now; that's how important the children are to the decisions we make," he said.

"The children are also due to come up with a menu, which we will, of course, balance out."

06.11.13 – *Charlie Peat*

As part of National School Meals Week, currently taking place, nearly half a million pupils will receive a free two course school meal

Nearly half a million pupils will be offered a free two-course meal as part of National School Meals Week.

In the 20th year of the event, the Great School Lunch is hoping to raise awareness of eating healthily at school.

The week has been organised by Local Authorities Caterers Association (LACA) and is one of many school meal programme that have taken place this year.

Anne Bull, National Chair of LACA said: "It is vital to our children's wellbeing that they eat a healthy, nutritious hot meal on a regular basis. School caterers are doing a great job feeding our young people during term-time.

"The aim of National School Meals Week is to showcase just how good school meals have become and to promote the Great School lunch to more students and parents. A school lunch helps young people recharge their batteries to be at their best for afternoon lessons."

06.11.13 – Sarah Scott

Queueing for their school dinners these youngsters got quite a surprise.

Pupils at Thomas Walling Primary School in **Blakelaw, Newcastle**, were joined by Newcastle United mascots Maggie and Monty for their lunch yesterday. Squealing with delight, the children were over the moon when the mascots walked into their dining room.

The giant Magpies, and members of the Newcastle United Foundation, joined the children as part of National School Meals Week, which runs until Friday and aims to give children across the country a school meal this week.

Thomas Walling Primary School is just one of the schools in the region taking part.

Julie Scott, head teacher, said the initiative had been a great success.

“We have 58% who get free school meals so 42% do not qualify so we wanted to give those children the chance to taste the free school meals as well,” she said.

“We are aware that some parents cannot afford to pay the £10 a week for school dinners, especially if they have more than one child at the school, so this is the chance for them to taste our school dinners and hopefully some may take it up.

“It is all about a healthy school meal and promoting healthy eating,” said Mrs Scott.

Yesterday children were given a choice of roast chicken, vegetable nuggets, tuna mayo sandwiches, all with potatoes, broccoli and beans.

There was also the option of a salad bar and plenty of fresh fruit.

“They love melon, it really seems to be a favourite,” added Mrs Scott.

Every day children are given a meat, vegetarian and sandwich option for their school dinner.

Year six pupil Isata Kamara, 10, was one of the pupils to try school meals for the first time yesterday.

“I have never had school dinners before and it was really nice,” she said.

06.11.13

Parents want more information about the contents of their children's school lunches, a poll suggests.

It reveals that mothers and fathers are increasingly interested in what goes into meals in school canteens.

ParentPay, which conducted the survey with school catering organisation LACA, suggested the rise was down to recent food scares, such as the horse meat scandal.

The figures, from an online poll of around 13,670 parents, found that 86.1% would like to be given details about the ingredients used in school meals, up from 80% last year.

This is an indication of the impact that recent food scares have had on the public, ParentPay said.

The horse meat scandal began to unfold in January when it emerged that frozen burgers supplied to several supermarkets including Tesco contained horse DNA.

Investigations revealed other beef products sold by retailers including lasagne and spaghetti bolognese were contaminated while meals in schools and hospitals had to be withdrawn after it was found they contained horse meat.

The poll, published to mark National School Meals Week, also reveals that more than half of parents (56.3%) want better information about food and good health.

Nine in 10 of the parents surveyed were satisfied with the school meals on offer for their child, the findings show.

The vast majority (92.7%) would like to see healthy food guidelines applied to all schools, regardless of school type.

Under the current system, strict national food standards apply to schools in England that are under local council control, but not to academies and free schools.

The School Food Plan, commissioned by the Government and published in the summer, considered concerns raised by campaigners – including TV chef Jamie Oliver – that these schools had been exempted.

The review found that while there was no widespread evidence that these schools were departing from the regulations, "it is wise to have some sort of safety net in place" and called for new food standards for all schools.

The Government has agreed to this move.

LACA's national chairwoman Anne Bull said: "The school catering industry has been working tirelessly to ensure that children are receiving great school lunches, so it is rewarding to see that over 90% of parents are satisfied with what their children are eating.

"It is also encouraging to see that parents are taking a greater interest in their children's diet with over half wanting better information about food and good health."

Clint Wilson, chief executive of ParentPay, said: "It is a critical time to be conducting this survey as it acts as a barometer of parents' views of the issues in the national school food debate."

PARENTS must continue to ride the wave created by Jamie Oliver's campaign to improve school meals and sign up their children if school kitchens are to survive, according to a public health official.

The TV chef's campaign to improve the quality of school dinners forced a blanket culture change by schools and Government officials across the country.

The battle to improve the nutritional value of the meals and the numbers eating them is not over though, with a call for more people to sign up if cooking meals is to remain economically viable for school caterers.

Fiona Dickens, public health programme manager at Swindon Council, said: "If you don't get many to sign up it's not viable and the school loses money, with the costs associated with running a kitchen.

"Many schools are now clubbing together. Those with kitchens can cook the meals and send their meals out to other schools to share costs.

"Some schools have sold their kitchens off in recent years and replaced them with IT suites."

The comments come during National School Meals Week, with schools across the nation hoping to provide one free meal before the weekend, with an aim of signing more parents up long-term.

In Swindon, the council's public health team funds the Swindon Healthy Schools Programme and recently backed a training programme for school catering managers fronted by the dinner lady who inspired Jamie Oliver.

Jeanette Orrey, school meals policy advisor to the Soil Association, began the two-month training programme in September. The council will listen to feedback and may roll it out to more school caterers.

One school which puts itself ahead of the curve created by the Naked Chef is Lethbridge Primary, which began serving its pupils organic food 10 years ago.

Under stewardship of catering manager Anna Spooner, the school was a joint winner of the Soil Association's Highland Spring School Dinner award in 2005, and was presented with the accolade by Oliver himself.

Since then the school has gone from strength to strength, with between 850 and 900 plates served per week at a cost of £2.30 per head to a roll of 480 pupils.

Anna said: "We have an open evening every year for parents to see exactly what we serve the children. They seem very happy."

The school has not signed up to this week's national initiative, but is confident of the work going on to improve its school meals.

"I'm totally confident in what we do. I'm a pretty good cook," said Anna, who has worked with the school for 10 years. "In other schools, you hear they do 40 plates a day and use packet sponge mixes.

"Children need to learn how to cook, and not just from a packet. If you can show them what proper food tastes like, they will be more likely to cook for themselves in the future."

06.11.13

PRIMARY and secondary school pupils had to look twice when they walked into the dinner hall yesterday as fun-loving dinner ladies swapped their uniform for colourful costumes.

The youngsters at Sacred Heart RC Primary School were served their lunch by Guy 'Forks' and a walking-talking bonfire as the catering staff dressed up to a bonfire night theme.

And Halloween may have passed but the students at St Hild's CE Secondary School were in for a fright as the dinner ladies there arrived in school as witches for the day.

The fun lunch was organised to mark National School Meals week, running throughout this week, aimed at celebrating everything that is great about school lunches.

As reported in the Mail earlier this week, 58 per cent of primary school pupils in the town have school dinners, a three per cent increase on the previous year and significantly higher than the national average of 43 per cent.

Joanne Shanks, community links coordinator at Sacred Heart RC Primary School, said: "It was really good fun with all of the catering staff getting dressed up and it was another way to try and encourage children to try a hot school meal.

"We are a healthy school and ensure all of the meals offered are part of a balanced diet for the children.

"The kids loved all of the staff getting dressed up, they couldn't believe it when they walked in to the dinner hall and saw them dressed up.

"The costumes the staff were wearing were brilliant."

More than 1.3 million school lunches were served up in Hartlepool last year.

And Hartlepool Borough Council staff are hoping the current trend, with more children opting for school lunches instead of packed lunches, continues.

Around 7,000 school meals are served up in the town every single day, costing all parents throughout the town £1.90 a day for their children.

04.11.13

Young children in Northumberland will be able to get two hot school dinners during National School Meals Week.

Northumberland County Council is providing the funding to enable every child in reception, years 1 and 2 and special schools to benefit from a hot school meal.

The educational benefits of a hot meal can provide, for example, better behaviour, and concentration and of course the educational performance in the afternoon. There is also evidence of improved social skills gained when children and staff spend the lunchtime period together.

Councillor Robert Arckless, policy board member for children's services, said: "The majority of parents make their decisions based on the historical memories. This is not the case with schools today and a lot of what the children like is on the menu."

"It is not to be restricted to children who currently pay for their school lunch. We are hoping that this ideally will involve all parents who would want their children to benefit, whether they currently pay for a meal or bring a packed lunch.

"However we cannot pay parents for the packed lunch they provide."

Please contact your school to find out the dates when it is going to take part.

04.11.13

Hundreds of Sheffield infants are tucking into free meals this week as part of an offer at 20 city schools.

The initiative marking National School Meals Week is designed to introduce youngsters in reception classes to the benefits of a freshly prepared nutritious daily dinner.

Schools to benefit are Acres Hill, Arbourthorne, Athelstan, Ballifield, Carfield, Dore, Emmaus, Gleadless, High Green, Hucklow, Malin Bridge, Netherthorpe, Pipworth, Porter Croft, Rainbow Forge, Sharrow, Shortbrook, St Ann's RC, St Catherine's RC and St Patrick's RC.

The scheme is part-funded by health group Sheffield Change4Life and is being delivered by catering company Taylor Shaw.

The move follows a similar pilot scheme called Welcome to School Meals, which was carried out in Sheffield over two weeks during the 2012/13 academic year.

Taylor Shaw provides catering to 115 primary schools across the city and has seen a gradual and sustained improvement in take up of school meals since being awarded the contract in 2011.

The move also comes after Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg made a pledge in September promising free school meals for all infant pupils across the country from next September.

The Sheffield Hallam MP said there was hard evidence that by giving a child a hot nutritious meal over lunchtime improved their concentration and their ability to learn.

Taylor Shaw's general manager Peter McGrath said: "Unfortunately there may be some children that do not have even one healthy, nutritious meal a day.

"Giving them the chance to do so by offering them a free freshly prepared meal at school is vitally important not just for children's health, but for giving them the best chance of being on task in class.

"Now that the Government has announced plans to make meals free for children in Key Stage One from next September, we hope that this will encourage even more children to choose school meals in future and be better equipped to fulfil their potential."

04.11.13 – Jo Henwood

There IS such thing as a free lunch

Primary school and special school children across Cheshire West and Chester will be offered a free school meal on Thursday (November 7) as part of National School Meals Week.

The council was the first in the country to take up the Great Free School Lunch initiative and if everyone takes up the offer this means that 23,000 meals will be served on that day.

Chester MP Stephen Mosley will be joining young diners for lunch at Dee Point Primary School in Blacon.

He said: "I am delighted that Cheshire West and Chester Council is offering free school meals to pupils during this year's National School Meals Week.

"I am looking forward to visiting Dee Point Primary School and seeing for myself the great school dinners that are available to our children at lunchtimes."

The council will also be running their next Twitter Day from the school on Blacon Point Road.

Councillor Mark Stocks, executive member for education and children said: "Our latest Twitter day report will provide a fascinating look behind the scenes at what's involved in preparing 23,000 school meals.

"We want to show as many pupils as possible that schools meals are a real alternative to packed lunches, offering healthy, nutritious, warm meals which are also tasty and filling.

"You can follow all the action on Twitter by following @go_cheshirewest or using the hash tag #cwactive."

The tweets will include information about the nutritional values of school meals, photographs of the food being prepared and final meal, information about school meals week and other activities happening during the day.

National School Meals Week Menu

Chicken Korma with Steamed Rice

Vinegar infused Fish Goujon (MSC)* with Seasoned Jacket Potatoes

Pasta in Tomato & Mascarpone Sauce with Garlic Bread

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Vegetable Medley

Garden Peas

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Golden Crunch Cookie

Fruit Jelly

Fresh Fruit Platter

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Orange Juice

Blackcurrant Juice

Water

\*Marine Stewardship Council – Sustainably Sourced

04.11.13

**Hundreds of Sheffield infants are tucking into free meals this week as part of an offer at 20 city schools.**

The initiative marking National School Meals Week is designed to introduce youngsters in reception classes to the benefits of a freshly prepared nutritious daily dinner.

Schools to benefit are Acres Hill, Arbourthorne, Athelstan, Ballifield, Carfield, Dore, Emmaus, Gleadless, High Green, Hucklow, Malin Bridge, Netherthorpe, Pipworth, Porter Croft, Rainbow Forge, Sharrow, Shortbrook, St Ann's RC, St Catherine's RC and St Patrick's RC.

The scheme is part-funded by health group Sheffield Change4Life and is being delivered by catering company Taylor Shaw.

The move follows a similar pilot scheme called Welcome to School Meals, which was carried out in Sheffield over two weeks during the 2012/13 academic year.

Taylor Shaw provides catering to 115 primary schools across the city and has seen a gradual and sustained improvement in take up of school meals since being awarded the contract in 2011.

The move also comes after Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg made a pledge in September promising free school meals for all infant pupils across the country from next September.

The Sheffield Hallam MP said there was hard evidence that by giving a child a hot nutritious meal over lunchtime improved their concentration and their ability to learn.

Taylor Shaw's general manager Peter McGrath said: "Unfortunately there may be some children that do not have even one healthy, nutritious meal a day.

"Giving them the chance to do so by offering them a free freshly prepared meal at school is vitally important not just for children's health, but for giving them the best chance of being on task in class.

"Now that the Government has announced plans to make meals free for children in Key Stage One from next September, we hope that this will encourage even more children to choose school meals in future and be better equipped to fulfil their potential.



# **Section 5**

## **Online – National**

06.11.13 - *Chris Pleasance*

## **What's for lunch? Parents demand to know what goes into school meals and want healthy food in all canteens**

Parents want more information about what goes into their children's school lunches, a new survey shows.

Over 90 per cent also want healthy eating criteria applied to all schools, including academies and free schools.

The two types of school are currently exempt from regulations covering healthy food, leading to campaigners such as Jamie Oliver criticising the government.

The School Food Plan review found that while there was no widespread evidence that these schools were departing from the regulations, 'it is wise to have some sort of safety net in place', which the government agreed to.

The survey also reveals that mothers and fathers are increasingly interested in what goes into school meals after the horsemeat scandal.

The figures, from an online poll of around 13,670 parents by ParentPay, found that 86 per cent would like to be given details about the ingredients used in school meals, up from 80 per cent last year.

The horse meat scandal began to unfold in January when it emerged that frozen burgers supplied to several supermarkets including Tesco contained horse DNA

Investigations revealed other beef products sold by retailers including lasagne and spaghetti bolognese were contaminated while meals in schools and hospitals had to be withdrawn after it was found they contained horse meat.

The poll, published to mark National School Meals Week, also reveals that more than more than half of parents want better information about food and good health.

Nine in 10 of the parents surveyed were satisfied with the school meals on offer for their child, the findings show.

LACA's national chairwoman Anne Bull said: 'The school catering industry has been working tirelessly to ensure that children are receiving great school lunches, so it is rewarding to see that over 90% of parents are satisfied with what their children are eating.

'It is also encouraging to see that parents are taking a greater interest in their children's diet with over half wanting better information about food and good health.'

Clint Wilson, chief executive of ParentPay, said: 'It is a critical time to be conducting this survey as it acts as a barometer of parents' views of the issues in the national school food debate.'



**06.11.13**

School dinners have improved but there should be a drive to get more children eating them as the take-up remains stubbornly low, an association of school caterers says.

Free schools and academies are currently exempt from the government's nutritional guidelines, but research found 92% of parents wanted to see the same standards applied to all schools.

The chair of the Lead Association for Catering in Education said people still remember soggy cabbage and lumpy custard, but reckoned "there has been really good hard work" to improve the food, and that: "We are finally cooking on gas".

Anne Bull said only 1% of packed lunches meet nutritional standards for school food, and that hot school meals were "by far the best option".

*Mrs Bull will be a guest on BBC2's Daily Politics where she will discuss the film at around 12:40 GMT.*



## **Section 6**

### **Online – Regional**

**05.11.13**

This week is National School Meals Week and all week we'll be looking at what's served up in our schools, what the pupils think and what the future holds. To begin with BEREN CROSS visited Bridlewood Primary School, where the meals are cooked on-site HEADTEACHER Jo Garton was so keen to make sure her pupils ate a healthy meal each day she decided to get them cooked on site.

Now around 100 of the 260 pupils at Bridlewood Primary School in Haydon Wick tuck into food cooked on the premises – with vegetables from its own garden on the menu.

National School Meals Week began yesterday, with schools across the nation hoping to provide one free meal before the weekend, though Bridlewood has not signed up.

The success of the school's own project means the national initiative is not a priority for them.

Jo said: "Some children do have dinners every day and they're not necessarily all children on free school meals. There are actually more children who take up school meals whose parents both work, which makes school meals the easier option."

The school charges £2.10 per day for one meal per child, a rate which has recently gone up, but one which isn't a problem for parents according to Jo.

Many parents have been inspired by the televised work of Jamie Oliver, who has made it his mission to improve school dinners, and as a result, the wellbeing of school pupils.

"It's really important that they get the proper nutrition, because without that they can't possibly concentrate and learn," said Jo.

The school has even taken its lunch hour as an opportunity to stimulate better behaviour in the classroom with a top table in the main hall, which is covered with a table cloth and adorned with fine china.

Those pupils with the best behaviour each week are rewarded with a spot on the table with Jo, for the rest of the school to see.

The focus on maximising that time for the pupils is behind the decision to make the lunch service more accountable and flexible to meet the children's needs.

"We wanted to make sure the service was more responsive and answerable to the consumers," said Jo.

"Now, Mrs Webb, the chief cook comes out most lunchtimes, talks to the children and asks them what they think of the food.

"She's getting the feedback every day.

"It is much more responsive than when we had an external contractor."

**07.11.13**

The Mayor and Mayoress of Rochdale joined pupils at Spotland Primary School for a Mexican style school dinner, as part of a national event celebrating school meals this week.

Spotland Primary School is one of 58 primary schools within the borough where the catering service is provided by Rochdale Council's Facilities Management team.

As well as meals with a Mexican twist there will be Caribbean, Italian and Indian themed days held at Spotland Primary and many other schools across the borough.

The Mayor, Councillor Peter Rush, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for the council's catering staff to highlight some of the top quality, healthy and nutritious meals they serve to children across the borough. They are also showing that healthy meals don't have to be boring - and a fun Mexican theme day is a great way to do this."

The event forms part of National Schools Meals Week - a weeklong national initiative running from the 4 to 8 November organised by the Local Authorities Caters Association.



# **Section 7**

## **Radio**

**Key figures:**

- 1) Interviews were broadcast on **65** radio stations
- 2) To an audience of at least **3, 369, 500** people.
- 3) For over **100** minutes of total air-time



**BBC RADIO NORFOLK**  
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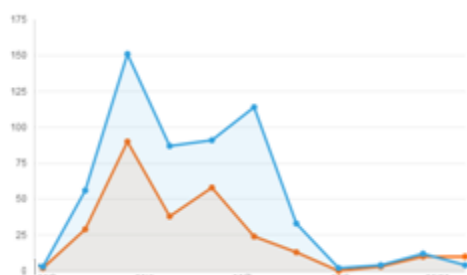


# **Section 8**

## **Social Media**

National School Meals Week was very successfully picked up on twitter, with @LACA\_UK and #GreatSchoolLunch receiving hundreds of tweets and retweets throughout the week (see below).

Tweets per day @LACA\_UK and #GreatSchoolLunch November 2<sup>nd</sup> – November 11<sup>th</sup>



We received tweets from several notable Parliamentarians including Sharon Hodgson MP, Henry Smith MP and Lord Storey of Childwell.



@LACA\_UK gained over 25 new followers throughout the week

The #GreatSchoolLunch hashtag was used over 530 times

Over 150 people saw our posts on Facebook.

