

Healthy eating in schools briefing for head teachers and governing bodies

Audience: Head teachers and governing bodies of maintained schools

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The food and drink provided in all council-maintained schools must meet [*The Healthy Eating in Schools \(Nutritional Standards and Requirements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013*](#) ('*Regulations*'). These *Regulations* are based on the previous Appetite for Life guidelines and form part of the wider [*Healthy Eating in Schools \(Wales\) Measure 2009*](#) ('*Measure*'). For a detailed guide to implementing the *Regulations* and *Measure* please refer to the [*Statutory guidance for local authorities and governing bodies*](#). This briefing summarises the above legislation, focusing on governing bodies duties, and outlines the support available from the WLGA.

Regulations

The *Regulations* set out **nutritional standards** for an average school lunch as well as **food and drink requirements** throughout the school day. The nutritional standards specify minimum or maximum values for energy and 13 nutrients and apply to an average school lunch calculated over each week of a menu cycle. The food and drink requirements describe the types of food and drink that must be provided, restricted and not permitted between **breakfast and 6pm**. [Posters](#) are available for schools, explaining these requirements to pupils and school staff.

Councils and governing bodies must **ensure that all food and drink provided on the school premises** is compliant with the *Regulations*, including:

- Breakfast, break time and lunchtime
- After school clubs
- Shops and enterprises
- Vending machines
- 6th Form cafes



The WLGA has developed a [Nutritional Analysis Guide](#) to assist school catering services, head teachers and governing bodies **analyse the nutritional composition of an average school lunch**. Nutritional analysis software and training is available through the WLGA for councils and schools. The Food in School Manager and Food in Schools Programme Coordinator are available to provide advice and support.

To help school catering services, head teachers and governing bodies collect evidence and demonstrate compliance with the *Regulations* the WLGA has produced an [Evidence Guide and Toolkit](#). The Food in Schools Manager issues annual [Certificates of Compliance](#) to catering services that submit **accurate and compliant** evidence and have their **provision checked** by the responsible council or governing body. This process is **voluntary** and can be used as **evidence** during Estyn inspections and Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes [National Quality Award](#) (NQA) assessments. The Food in Schools Manager has also provided Estyn inspectors and NQA assessors with a guidance document detailing [Obvious breaches, inconsistent messages and good practices relating to healthy eating in schools](#).

Measure

The *Measure* gave Welsh Ministers the power to make the above *Regulations* and places a duty on Estyn to keep Welsh Ministers informed about actions taken at maintained schools to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The *Measure* also places the following duties on councils and governing bodies:

- **Promote healthy eating and drinking** by pupils.
- Include in the **governor's report** information about the action taken to promote healthy eating and drinking by pupils.
- Ensure that a supply of **free, fresh drinking water is available at all times**.
- **Encourage the take up** of school meals and milk.
- Take steps to **protect the identity** of pupils receiving free school lunches.

The *Regulations* **do not apply to** food and drink brought into school for personal consumption; fundraising events, social or recreational events; religious or cultural occasions and as rewards for achievement, behaviour or effort. **Medically prescribed dietary requirements** are also exempt from the *Regulations*. The WLGA hosts a National Dietitian for Special Diets in Schools to advise and support Welsh Government, councils and schools in relation to special diets in schools' matters.

Governing bodies should consider their duty to promote healthy eating and drinking and **implement healthy eating policies in relation to the above as part of a whole-school approach**. This is in line with the [Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience](#) within the new Curriculum for Wales. Information is available for primary schools to share with parents, encouraging [Healthy snacks](#) and [Healthy drinks](#) to be brought into school.