

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
Date of Decision/ Meeting	22 September 2022

SCHOOL FOOD PLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider an update on the School Food Plan with a particular focus on:

- Details of the Schools Food Plan
- Free School Meal uptake
- Free School Breakfast uptake
- Details of Fluoridated milk provision

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the content of the report and identify any areas for additional scrutiny, where appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The report was requested by the committee and the content provides an update on the current position in relation to these key areas.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

6.0 Background information

6.1 School Food Plan

As part of the School Food Plan, a new set of standards for all food served in schools was launched by the Department for Education. The school food standards are designed to help children develop healthy eating habits, and ensure that they have the energy and nutrition they need to get the most from their whole school day. It is important to serve food that looks good and tastes delicious. The key principle of the standards is to provide a wide range of foods across the week. Use fresh, sustainable and locally sourced ingredients and to talk to children about what they are eating. The standards specify which types of food should be served and how often.

The standards encourage schools to use Sustainable procurements the government buying standards in order to reduce salt, saturated fat and sugar in children's diets.

A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of:

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Plenty of unrefined starchy foods
- Small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar and salt

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) are undertaking a School Foods Standards discovery pilot, which Blackpool has been selected to take part in. The pilot is due to commence in September 2022. The pilot will involve Enforcement, Public Health and the Catering Services Team. The key aim of the pilot is to check whether schools are compliant with the School Food Standards as part of the regular food hygiene inspection. This work will help the local authority understand whether all Schools in Blackpool are meeting the School Food Standard. It is important to note that these standards are guidance and not enforceable, and so part of the pilot is to consider what powers the local authority has in order to ensure schools comply with the standards.

It is important to note that Blackpool Catering Services does not provide the Catering for every School in Blackpool. The Catering Team provide catering services for 31 schools across the town. Schools that do not utilise the catering services have contracts with private catering firms to deliver their school meals, therefore the local authority has no control on the quality of food delivered in these schools. However, Blackpool Catering provide Services to the majority of the School.

In addition to working to the School Food Plan, the Catering Team also meets the Food for Life Standard. The standard is about making a commitment to serve meals cooked from scratch, using sustainable fish, free range eggs and British meat that can be traced back to the farm. In addition it is about using locally sourced and ethical ingredients that support the local economy and are better for health, nature and the climate.

6.2 Free School Meals

Children in Blackpool face particular high levels of poverty, with 38.56% of children living in income deprived households. The Schools, pupils and their characteristics: Academic Year 20/21 report highlights there were 7526 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals across both primary and secondary schools. The table below provides a breakdown of the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school emails for each individual school.

School Name	Headcount of pupils	No. of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	% of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
Spenn Brook School	14	0	0
Educational Diversity	128	73	57
Anchorsholme Primary Academy	589	97	16.5
Baines' Endowed Primary School and Children's Centre, A Church of England Academy	542	176	32.5
Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School	378	126	33.3
Blackpool Gateway Academy	374	238	63.6
Blackpool St John's Church of England Primary School	207	99	47.8
Blackpool St Nicholas CofE Primary School	403	56	13.9
Boundary Primary School	375	247	65.9
Christ The King Catholic Academy	236	91	38.6
Devonshire Primary Academy	431	272	63.1
Hawes Side Academy	567	187	33
Holy Family Catholic Primary School	211	40	19
Kincraig Primary School	210	103	49
Langdale Free School	94	24	25.5
Layton Primary School	622	266	42.8
Marton Primary Academy and Nursery	276	121	43.8

Mereside Primary Academy	279	179	64.2
Moor Park Primary School	421	137	32.5
Norbreck Primary Academy	614	101	16.4
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School	198	16	8.1
Revoe Learning Academy	439	240	54.7
Roseacre Primary Academy	614	171	27.9
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School	204	29	14.2
St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy	226	94	41.6
St John Vianney's Catholic Primary School	448	94	21
St Kentigern's Catholic Primary School	210	34	16.2
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School	204	40	19.6
Stanley Primary School	572	153	26.7
Thames Primary Academy	439	244	55.6
Waterloo Primary Academy	602	310	51.5
Westcliff Primary Academy	232	36	15.5
Westminster Primary Academy	391	294	75.2
Armfield Academy	684	194	28.4
Blackpool Aspire Academy	786	441	56.1
Highfield Leadership Academy	630	250	39.7
Montgomery Academy	1154	367	31.8
South Shore Academy	750	421	56.1
St George's School A Church of England Academy	1017	282	27.7
St Mary's Catholic Academy	1225	291	23.8
Unity Academy Blackpool	973	568	58.4
Highfurlong School	104	58	55.8
Lotus School	20	15	75
Park Community Academy	304	169	55.6
Woodlands School	118	82	69.5

Free school meals are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support

- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you’re not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

The responsibility for checking the eligibility of applicants for free school meals rests with the individual schools. Schools can choose to work with the local authorities to carry out these checks. In Blackpool, our Benefits team carry out the service of checking eligibility for Free School Meals and undertake the service for a few Academies who have signed up to this. Therefore we are not in a position to fully understand the uptake of Free School Meals but know that 3545 children are registered for Free School Meals in the town. However, we are aware that not all families take up the offer of meals and further work needs to be done to improve the uptake.

Since September 2014, state funded schools in England have been required by law to provide free lunches to pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2, who are not otherwise entitled to benefits-related free school meals.

For 2022/23, funding of £470 is allocated to schools for each pupil eligible for FSM. This equates to £2.47 per day (over 190 days) if every child takes a meal every day. The table below provides the details of the funding each school receives, which is based on the number of children eligible to claim free school meals.

School Name	Free School Meals (Primary)	Free School Meals (Secondary)
Total	£2,118,070	£1,322,986
Layton Primary School	£122,200.00	£0.00
Kincraig Primary School	£39,480.00	£0.00
Boundary Primary School	£112,800.00	£0.00
Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School	£63,450.00	£0.00
Blackpool St Nicholas CofE Primary School	£30,080.00	£0.00
Blackpool St John's Church of England Primary School	£46,530.00	£0.00
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School	£10,810.00	£0.00
St John Vianney's Catholic Primary School	£42,300.00	£0.00
St Kentigern's Catholic Primary School	£19,740.00	£0.00

Holy Family Catholic Primary School	£16,920.00	£0.00
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School	£14,570.00	£0.00
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School	£18,330.00	£0.00
Moor Park Primary School	£67,210.00	£0.00
Stanley Primary School	£71,440.00	£0.00
Revoe Learning Academy	£110,450.00	£0.00
St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy	£41,360.00	£0.00
Marton Primary Academy and Nursery	£52,640.00	£0.00
Blackpool Gateway Academy	£94,940.00	£0.00
Roseacre Primary Academy	£87,420.00	£0.00
Westminster Primary Academy	£130,190.00	£0.00
Hawes Side Academy	£83,660.00	£0.00
Norbreck Primary Academy	£47,940.00	£0.00
Anchorsholme Primary Academy	£50,290.00	£0.00
Thames Primary Academy	£106,220.00	£0.00
Waterloo Primary Academy	£145,230.00	£0.00
Westcliff Primary Academy	£16,920.00	£0.00
Mereside Primary Academy	£78,490.00	£0.00
Baines' Endowed Church of England Primary Academy	£78,490.00	£0.00
Christ The King Catholic Academy	£40,420.00	£0.00
Devonshire Primary Academy	£124,080.00	£0.00
Langdale Free School	£11,750.00	£0.00
South Shore Academy	£0.00	£212,910.00
Blackpool Aspire Academy	£0.00	£217,610.00
Highfield Leadership Academy	£0.00	£123,610.00
Montgomery Academy	£0.00	£189,880.00
St George's School A Church of England Academy	£0.00	£148,990.00
St Mary's Catholic Academy	£0.00	£141,000.00
Unity Academy Blackpool	£107,160.00	£167,790.00
Armfield Academy	£34,560.00	£121,196.00

6.3 Universal Free School Breakfast

The universal free school breakfast scheme (UFSB) was introduced by Blackpool Council in 2013. The scheme provides a universally free school breakfast and fortified milk to all primary and special needs schools. The UFSB is funded by Public Health at a cost of £800,000 and

delivered by Catering Services. Breakfasts are delivered on every school day to Reception to Year Six classes inclusive, providing a range of bread, dairy and fruit options. Breakfast provision varies between schools, with most schools providing a pre-wrapped disposable model in the classroom provided during the first 10 minutes of the school day. A canteen service is provided in schools that have the facilities and staffing, but these schools are the minority.

At the present time Public Health is undertaking a review of the scheme to ensure that the scheme is providing a healthy breakfast that meets the requirements of the School Food Plan and ensuring that the most vulnerable children are benefitting from the scheme, as well as being delivered in the most cost effective way.

As part of the review work it is important that we seek the views of the primary schools about the scheme. In September, a member of the Public Health team will be circulating a survey to all schools in order to gather these views. In addition to this, Public Health also want to seek the views of the parents and a survey will be sent out to them to also gather their views and opinions. All the data/information gathered will be anonymised and will be used to help the Public Health and Catering Services consider future service delivery models.

Fluoridated Milk Scheme

The fluoridated milk scheme was introduced in November 2016 as an additional vehicle for fluoride administration in the town, to contribute towards reducing the high prevalence of dental caries in children. Prior to implementation, urinary fluoride excretion levels were monitored in a sample of children. The results indicated that the levels were below the range recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO recommends fluoridated milk as being effective in reducing the incidence of dental decay.

Fluoridated milk was offered to all children in Years 1-6 via the universal Free School Breakfast initiative (FSB). Parents were provided with information on fluoridated milk and were able to decline inclusion in the scheme if they preferred their child(ren) to receive non-fluoridated milk. Approximately 52% of the milk ordered by schools is fluoridated, with an estimated 4,500 children therefore drinking fluoridated milk on a daily basis. Work is ongoing with the schools to improve the update of fluoridated milk and to achieve the levels of consumption that were in place prior to COVID.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None

8.0 Financial considerations:

- 8.1 Pressure of increasing costs of food and ability to continue meeting the standards of the School Food Plan and maintaining the required quality standards.

The cost per head of £2.47 is restrictive in the current financial climate.

Pressure on the Public Health Grant

9.0 Legal considerations:

- 9.1 None

10.0 Risk management considerations:

- 10.1 Due to the increase in cost of living and the price rises in food, this puts schools under pressure to meet the School Food Plan.

The continual tendering of school catering services by the Schools has the potential to destabilise the delivery of school food plan. It is risk for the local authority if the catering team are not able to retain the contracts and reduces the local authority's ability to shape and influence food quality in schools.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

- 11.1 There are no concerns around equalities. The report focuses on children who are eligible for free school meals. The free breakfast scheme is a universal offer so not discriminating against specific groups. The Fluoridated milk scheme is offered to all children in all primary schools across Blackpool from Year 1 to Year 6.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

- 12.1 The Catering Team works with the Food for Life Standard which means there is a commitment to serve meals cooked from scratch, using sustainable fish, free range eggs and British meat that can be trace back to the farm. In addition it is about using locally source and ethical ingredients that support your local economy and are better for health, nature and our climate

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

- 13.1 There will be a consultation about the Free School Breakfast scheme with Schools and parents to consider how the scheme could be improved.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None