



Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools

Report of the Healthy Eating Scrutiny Task Group

April 2006

Task Group Membership

Jo Hodges (Lead Member)
Bob Bullock
Jill Fairbrother-Millis
Reg Farmer
Penelope Morgan
Sean Shannon
Wally Stewart

Advisor to Task Group

Denise Mortimore, University of Worcester

Officer Support

Suzanne O'Leary (Overview and Scrutiny Manager)
Alyson Grice (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Samantha Morris (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Andy McHale (Scrutiny Liaison Officer, Children's Services)

Further copies of this report are available from:

Overview and Scrutiny Team
Legal and Democratic Services
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester WR5 2NP
Tel: 01905 766916
E-mail: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/healthyeatingscrutiny

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Foreword

I am pleased to present the final report of the Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools scrutiny task group.

All parents are concerned about what their children eat from the moment they are born. It may be the quantity, too much or too little, or it may be the quality resulting from a child's natural curiosity to want to try all sorts and often choose what the parent would rather they didn't. This scrutiny report arose from what has become a very public and well documented national concern about the foods our children are eating in school, and a desire to improve our children's diet so that they are eating healthily and to their best advantage educationally.

Much research has been done by eminent doctors, nutritionists and psychologists about the effect food and drink has on our children and we at Worcestershire County Council are concerned that the children in our schools and those whom we look after have the healthiest diet available when they are in our schools and in our care.

Much publicity has been made by celebrities like Jamie Oliver about school lunches and the Government has recognised that it is time our children's diet was treated seriously. It is with this in mind and the acknowledged link between food and drink and behaviour, concentration and learning that we embarked on this piece of scrutiny.

As a recently retired teacher of 28 years I know that the behaviour and concentration of pupils varies considerably from one part of the day to another and in my experience children are often better able to learn in the morning than the afternoon. This can no doubt be attributed to a variety of causes such as tiredness, weather and interest in the subject but I was convinced that it was also dependent on what the children had eaten and drunk at lunchtime. Hence our task group set out to investigate what is taking place in our schools at the moment with regard to healthy eating and what conclusions and advice we could offer to schools to improve the concentration and behaviour of our pupils through the foods and drink they consume.

We sent out a questionnaire to all first, middle, primary, high, pupil referral units and special schools in the County. We had an extremely good response - well over 50% - showing how important schools regard this issue. There was naturally some reluctance amongst schools in some cases to admit that their pupils had periods of the day when they were not fully engaged in the work they were doing but a clear picture emerged that there was anecdotal evidence of a lessening of concentration and behaviour in the afternoon amongst some pupils. My thanks to all the schools that did respond to our questionnaire and for the honest way they answered the questions.

The conclusions we have reached and the recommendations we have made are not what we might have originally expected. In some cases we are advising schools about the organisation of their working day and the priorities they set, but we believe that these recommendations, if implemented, will lead to better concentration and behaviour amongst our pupils and a resulting improvement in learning and achievement.

I would like to thank all the members of the Scrutiny Task Group for the hard work and enthusiasm they have shown when researching and investigating this topic. They have visited schools and questioned experts and practitioners and in one case attended a conference in Edinburgh to gain information. I would also like to thank

Dave Traxson, Senior Educational Psychologist, Cath Phillipson, the Healthy Schools Programme Co-ordinator, George Keighley, retired Catering Officer and his successor Julia McClure, Professor David Benton, Department of Psychology, University of Wales, Swansea who is a leading expert on the effect of diet on behaviour, Mos Bradley and Angela Williams, Great Grub, Nicola Phipps, a qualified nutritionist, teaching assistant and parent, and the school caterers and pupils who have all contributed to our findings.

A special thank you to Denise Mortimore from University of Worcester who has been the group's advisor throughout and attended our meetings and enthusiastically contributed her professional expertise.

Finally I would like to express a huge thank you to the scrutiny officers who have worked with us on this report. Without their energy, enthusiasm, innovative thinking, organisation and patience we would not have produced such a professional piece of work.

Jo Hodges
Lead Member of the Healthy Eating in
Worcestershire Schools Scrutiny Task Group

April 2006

Executive Summary

Terms of Reference

- To find out the current situation regarding healthy eating in schools in Worcestershire.
- To try to establish whether a healthy diet will result in better behaviour and improved pupil concentration in class and, as a consequence, improvement in educational standards.
- To identify what dietary guidelines and policies exist for schools, and establish whether they are being followed.

Key Findings

- Out of the 150 schools that responded to our questionnaire 81% were in some way - and in many cases lots of ways - trying to promote the healthy eating message either as part of the Healthy Schools Programme, or as part of a school initiated approach to a healthier lifestyle. The task group was very heartened by this proactive approach by our schools.
- There were many elements of good practice in many schools but also inconsistencies. Schools could benefit from sharing good practice.
- The evidence is inconclusive on the impact of food on behaviour. Anecdotally, there is a feeling that some foods do have an effect on some children but not all. This is based in many cases on observation and common sense, although we are aware that there are many other influences on behaviour patterns, such as tiredness, excitement and the weather.
- It is important to maintain steady blood sugar levels for optimum concentration and behaviour.
- Drinking water throughout the day will maintain hydration and aid concentration.
- All school catering staff would benefit from nutritional training and qualifications.

Recommendations

The Impact of Food on Behaviour

Recommendation 1

**We recommend that the Local Authority continues to monitor evidence on the impact of food on the behaviour and concentration levels of pupils and revises its guidance to schools and catering companies accordingly.
(Paragraph 4)**

Breakfast and Snacks:

Recommendation 2

We recommend that schools provide information to parents and children highlighting the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast. (Paragraph 5.1 to 5.4)

Recommendation 3

We recommend that primary schools consider incorporating an afternoon break into the timetable to allow pupils to have a healthy snack in the afternoon. We also recommend that high schools consider having two substantial breaks in the day. This would avoid dips in blood sugar and therefore allow pupils to more easily maintain levels of concentration. (Paragraph 5.5 to 5.6)

Recommendation 4

The task group welcomes the Government ban on fizzy drinks, chocolate and crisps and the moves by some schools to reduce their availability ahead of the ban. Furthermore, we recommend that the Local Authority issues guidance to all schools that fizzy drinks, chocolate and crisps should not be included in packed lunches. (Paragraph 5.7 to 5.9)

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Recommendation 5

We recommend that the Local Authority considers extending the very popular free fruit and vegetable scheme to provide fruit or vegetables for all Key Stage 2 pupils as well. Wherever possible, contracts should be negotiated with Worcestershire fruit and vegetable growers for whole fruit of a size appropriate to a child's appetite. (Paragraph 5.10 to 5.12)

Milk

Recommendation 6

We recommend that, as part of the drive towards healthy eating and drinking, parents should be given the option to purchase milk for their child throughout primary years and that it should be available in high school restaurants, vending machines and tuck shops. (Paragraph 5.13 to 5.14)

A Universal Hot Meals Service

Recommendation 7

We recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Steering Committee be given the opportunity to review and comment on the Local Authority's plans for the reintroduction of a universal hot meal service. (Paragraph 6.1 to 6.3)

Packed Lunches

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the Local Authority produces an information pack to share with parents, containing practical advice about the importance of breakfast and suggestions for healthy snacks and lunch boxes. We would suggest that parents would be particularly receptive to such advice when their children enter the reception year at age four or five. (Paragraph 6.5 to 6.8)

The Social Side of Meals

Recommendation 9

We recommend that schools ensure that all pupils spend at least 20 minutes eating lunch to avoid the race to get out and play. This would give children the opportunity to experience the mealtime as a social occasion, thus improving social skills and encouraging calmer behaviour. (Paragraph 6.9 to 6.12)

New Nutritional Standards

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the Local Authority should investigate ways to support schools and catering companies in implementing the new nutritional guidelines that the Government is currently consulting on, which will come into force from September 2006. (Paragraph 6.13 to 6.14)

Training for Catering Staff

Recommendation 11

We very much welcome the funding that the Local Authority plans to use for training for the people who produce the food that our children eat in schools. We recommend that the Authority should aim to reach a position where all school catering staff receive basic nutritional training. (Paragraph 6.15 to 6.19)

Recommendation 12

We recommend that the Local Authority should facilitate an annual meeting of caterers working in the County to allow them to discuss concerns and share best practice. (Paragraph 6.20)

Procurement

Recommendation 13

We recommend that the Local Authority should further investigate the potential for joint procurement to allow groups of schools to negotiate better deals with suppliers. (Paragraph 6.21)

Recommendation 14

We recommend that all schools and catering companies be encouraged to follow the good practice of buying locally sourced produce from Worcestershire growers. (Paragraph 6.22)

Recommendation 15

We also recommend that, as part of the educational experience, schools should be encouraged to grow some of their own food where feasible. (Paragraph 6.23)

Water

Recommendation 16

We recommend that all schools in the County should have a consistent approach to drinking water in school. Children should be allowed bottles of water in the classroom and be actively encouraged to sip water throughout the day. (Paragraph 7).

Promoting the Healthy Eating Message

Recommendation 17

We recommend that schools should continue to adopt a whole school approach to healthy eating and promote the healthy eating message wherever possible throughout school life. (Paragraph 8.1 to 8.5)

Recommendation 18

We recommend that the Local Authority adopts a wider and more varied approach to promoting healthy eating to parents and pupils including a publicity campaign beyond schools eg in supermarkets, newspapers and through drama presentations. (Paragraph 8.6 to 8.8)

Engaging Young People

Recommendation 19

We recommend that the Local Authority facilitates the sharing of good practice that is already happening in a number of schools to engage young people with the healthy eating message. (Paragraph 8.9 to 8.11)

Monitoring by the Governing Body

Recommendation 20

We recommend that, as suggested by the National Governors' Council, all schools have a named governor with a special interest in healthy eating in schools. (Paragraph 8.12)

Developing the County Council Website

Recommendation 21

We recommend that the County Council website be expanded to bring together the information on healthy eating that the Local Authority provides to schools, parents and pupils in one easily accessible place. (Paragraph 8.13)

Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools Scrutiny Task Group

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The past couple of years have seen a transformation in attitudes to school meals. Not since the creation of the welfare state has there been such a national focus on the food that children eat in schools, partly as a result of Jamie Oliver's Feed Me Better campaign. Rising levels of childhood obesity and other diet related diseases, and concern about the poor nutritional standard of school meals have led to increased interest in food and its effect on our children's health and behaviour from all quarters – from government and parents alike.
- 1.2 It was in this context that, early in 2005, the former Scrutiny Steering Group identified healthy eating in Worcestershire schools as a suitable issue for scrutiny. As local elections were looming, it was decided to set up a scrutiny task group to start work following the elections in May. In setting its terms of reference, the task group decided that it would wish to focus particularly on whether a healthy diet would result in better behaviour and improved pupil concentration in class and, as a consequence, an improvement in educational standards in the County's schools.
- 1.3 As the scrutiny has progressed, central government has moved forward with a number of related initiatives aimed at improving the quality of school food:
 - In May 2005 the Government set up the independent School Meals Review Panel to revise school meal standards. The Panel reported in September 2005 (*Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food*) and, as a result, from September 2006 new minimum standards for school lunches will be introduced to ensure pupils get essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Similar standards will ban chocolate, crisps, and sugary fizzy drinks from vending machines.
 - The School Food Trust has been launched to support schools in moving to healthy meals, giving independent support and advice to schools and parents.
 - The Government has provided additional funding for Local Authorities and schools to invest in improving school meals. The money for LAs will be dependent on the Authority having a plan in place by September 2008 for the reintroduction of a universal hot meals service.
 - The new Ofsted inspection framework will expect schools to present evidence to Ofsted about their general approach to food and healthy eating as well as more specifically about the standard of school lunches.
- 1.4 The scrutiny, and in particular the questionnaire and visits to schools, has shown us the large amount of excellent work that is already being undertaken in this area by both schools and the Local Authority. Individual

schools are working imaginatively to influence pupils' choices and educate children and parents about the benefits of healthy eating.

- 1.5 The Healthy Schools Programme has undoubtedly had a major impact on the improvements we are seeing in schools. The schools involved in the Healthy Eating core theme are promoting healthier eating habits and becoming much more successful in helping pupils to make appropriate choices. Through designing and managing the 'Great Grub' programme, the Healthy Schools team has worked with 16 first and primary schools on improving the contents of lunchboxes, sampling healthy food, increasing children's intake of fruit and vegetables and the importance of drinking water.

2. Terms of Reference

- To find out the current situation regarding healthy eating in schools in Worcestershire.
- To try to establish whether a healthy diet will result in better behaviour and improved pupil concentration in class and, as a consequence, improvement in educational standards.
- To identify what dietary guidelines and policies exist for schools, and establish whether they are being followed.

3. How the Scrutiny was carried out

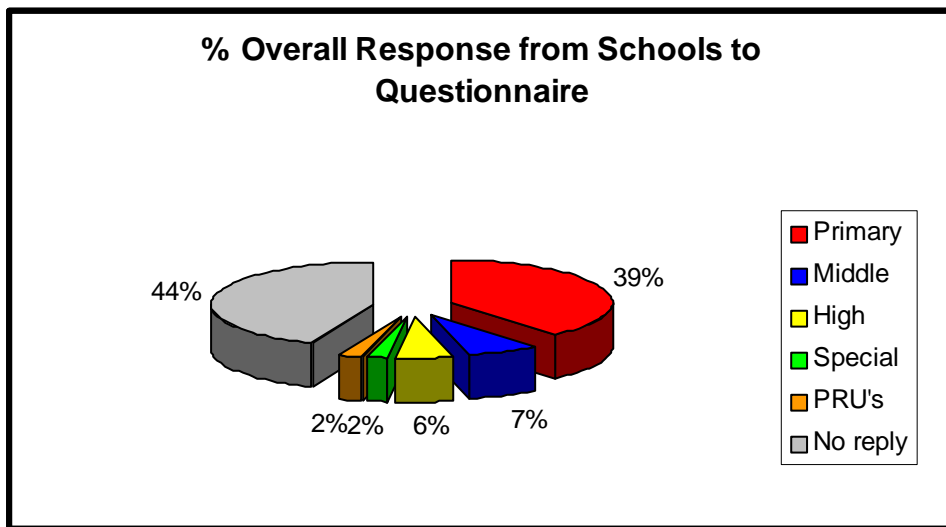
- 3.1 The task group has gathered their evidence in a number of different ways to inform the review. Throughout the review members were advised by Denise Mortimore, Nutritionist, University of Worcester.

Reports from the service

- 3.2 Several reports were received from the following officers working within the Children's Services Directorate:
- Catering Officer - about how the service has evolved and a snap shot of where it is now;
 - Healthy Schools Programme Co-ordinator - about the Healthy Schools Programme and how schools achieve Healthy School Status;
 - Senior Educational Psychologist – about the effect of dehydration/rehydration on cognitive function and behaviour and the positive effects of 'slow burn' carbohydrates in avoiding blood sugar highs and lows;
 - Cabinet Member with Responsibility and the Head of Policy Development - discussed DfES funding arrangements, proposed spending patterns and the free school meal allowance.

Consultation exercise with schools, parents, governors and pupils

3.3 Where possible, members of the task group and other interested County Councillors visited schools in their electoral division. The remaining schools were sent a questionnaire (attached as appendix 1). In total 269 schools were contacted of which 150 (56%) returned completed questionnaires. An analysis of the questionnaire responses can be found at appendix 2.



3.4 The task group also wrote to all parent governors to ask for their views on healthy lunch boxes and school meals, and for their suggestions for ways to discuss findings with parents. Unfortunately, only 6 responses were received and a subsequent follow up meeting was cancelled due to unavailability.

3.5 In addition, the task group talked to some students directly. A meeting was held with members of the School Councils of Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College and Nunnery Wood High School and members also spoke to a group of primary school children from across the County. The questions that we asked the High School pupils are attached as appendix 3.

Meeting with catering staff

3.6 The task group met with representatives of catering companies and in-house school meal providers. A copy of the questions that were asked is attached as appendix 4.

Expert advice

3.7 The group heard evidence from Professor David Benton, Department of Psychology, University of Wales, Swansea, an internationally renowned expert on the effect of diet on mood and cognitive functioning. Professor Benton talked about whether there was a link between diet and children's behaviour and suggested ways to improve concentration.

- 3.8 Members heard from Nicola Phipps, Nutritionist and Teaching Assistant who talked about her experience of the impact of food on behaviour, her concerns about the nutritional content of packed lunches and the importance of nutrition education in primary schools.
- 3.9 One member of the task group attended a conference in Edinburgh on 'Diet, Behaviour and the Junk Food Generation' which examined the relationship between diet, behaviour and learning in school-aged children. The conference was organised by Food and Behaviour Research in association with Napier University, Edinburgh.
- 3.10 The task group also met Mos Bradley and Angela Williams of Great Grub who were contracted by the Local Authority to work with specific primary schools advising in the main on healthier lunch boxes and associated initiatives. They talked to us about how they believe that the contents of lunch boxes can influence children's behaviour.
- 3.11 Jo Hodges, Lead Member of the task group also wrote to the Directors of Public Health for Redditch and Bromsgrove PCT, South Worcestershire PCT and Wyre Forest PCT to ask them to express their views on the scrutiny exercise.

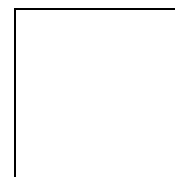
Desktop Research

- 3.12 Members consulted many reports and journals, including:
- Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food – report of the School Meals Review Panel
 - Food Policy in Schools – National Governors' Council
 - Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools - Department for Education and Skills
 - National Healthy School Status – A Guide for Schools
 - Changing Diets, Changing Minds: How food affects mental well being and behaviour – Sustain the alliance for better food and farming
 - Burger Boy and Sporty Girl – report by Barnardo's
 - Local and National Press Articles
 - A wide range of websites and national journals were also used as part of research information

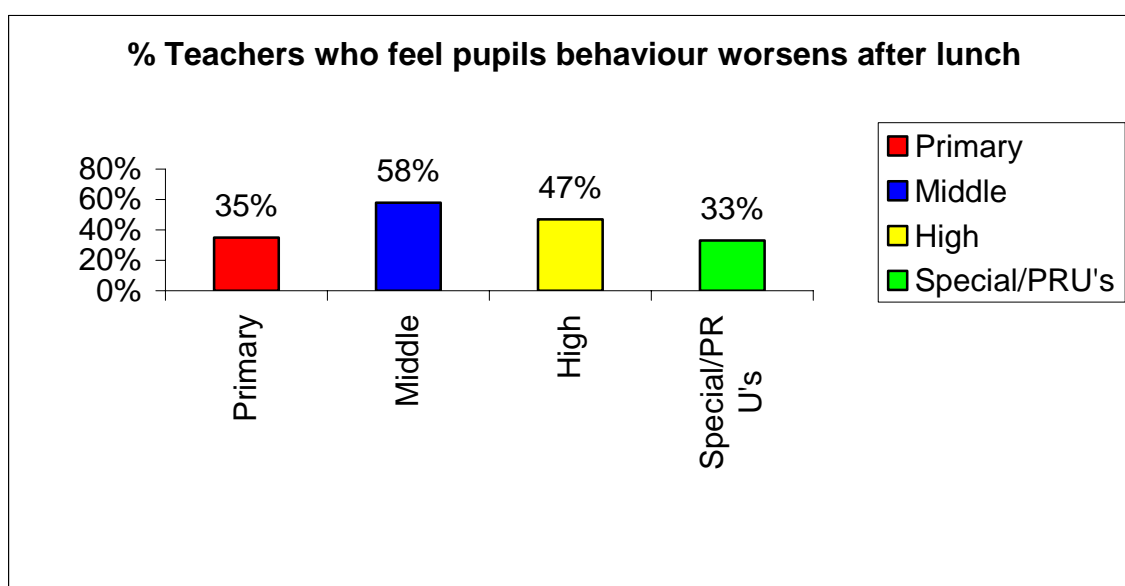
Meetings of the Task Group

- 3.13 A full schedule of activity is attached at appendix 5.

4. The Impact of Food on Behaviour



4.1 The task group has talked to many different people about whether the food that children eat has an influence on their behaviour. Of course, to discover the definitive answer to this would require a long-term, full-scale scientific study, which was beyond the remit of the scrutiny task group. However, some studies appear to show an influence of food on mood and mental health (*Feeding Minds: The impact of food on mental health* – Mental Health Foundation) and although the anecdotal evidence we have heard has not enabled us to reach a definite conclusion, we have on several occasions heard from various people that what children eat can sometimes influence their behaviour (along with a number of other contributory factors, such as weather, tiredness and too much or insufficient activity). In our questionnaire to schools we asked teachers whether they felt pupils' behaviour changed after lunch and the responses are shown in the chart below.



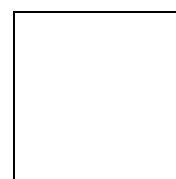
4.2 We further enquired whether, where schools had changed to a healthier menu, there had been noticeable improvement in pupils' behaviour. The responses to this question were many and varied and were particularly difficult to analyse. However, schools did not describe the major impact on children's behaviour that we had perhaps anticipated when we started the scrutiny exercise. Many schools found it difficult to assess the impact of food on the behaviour and concentration levels of their pupils. Some felt that, anecdotally, food containing, for example, lots of additives or sugar did affect their pupils' behaviour. Others had not noticed changes of behaviour or were not convinced that food was to blame.

4.3 The scientific evidence is not clear cut either. Although there is some evidence of the positive impact of Omega 3 supplements on brain function (it has been suggested that they can decrease aggression and hostility), it was also suggested to us that the impact of additives or sugar on the majority of children may be overstated and may only affect some children some of the time. It is very difficult to assess changes in behaviour scientifically. Professor Benton suggested that you would need to film a class before eating a particular food and then again afterwards and then attempt to measure the differences in behaviour. He also warned us about the dangers of demonising certain foods as he felt this would only make them more attractive to young people. It would also give the impression that only certain foods are predisposed to cause certain types of behaviour when in fact there are dozens of everyday foods, including for example wheat, dairy products and grapes, that are a problem for some, but not all, children.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Local Authority continues to monitor evidence on the impact of food on the behaviour and concentration levels of pupils and revises its guidance to schools and catering companies accordingly.

5. Breakfast and Snacks



The importance of breakfast

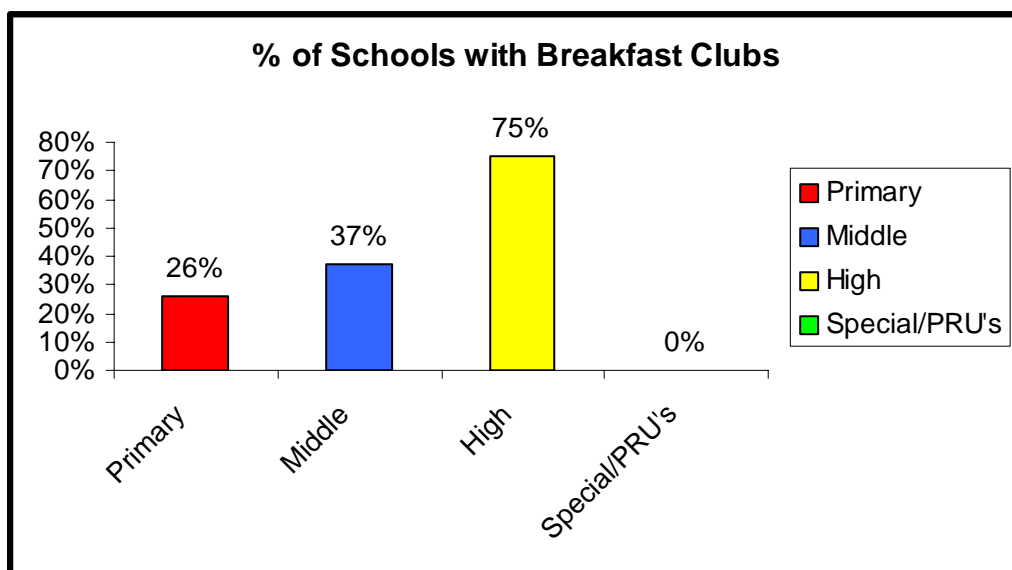
5.1 Breakfast has long been recognised as the most important meal of the day and the task group heard from many sources that a healthy breakfast is linked to better health, concentration and behaviour in our schools. Bridget Wardley, paediatric dietician and member of the Paediatric Group of the British Dietetic Association has reported that: "Research has shown children who have breakfast perform better than those who go without." Children have smaller stomachs and high energy levels which means they burn off food quickly. Without breakfast, they may be very hungry by mid-morning break and tempted by high fat, high calorie snacks. Children who do not have breakfast may have low blood sugar and dehydration, which can affect their ability to concentrate. According to the Sodexo School Meals and Lifestyle Survey 2005, 8% of children have nothing to eat before school, and this rises to 12% for 15-16 year olds and 17% for 15-16 year old girls.

5.2 The type of breakfast eaten is also important. We heard from Dave Traxson, Senior Educational Psychologist and Professor Benton that breakfast (and indeed all snacks) should ideally consist of foods with a low glycaemic index (GI) value which slowly release sugar into the blood providing a steady supply of energy. Foods with a high GI value cause a rapid but short-lived rise in blood sugar, leading to a 'blood sugar rollercoaster' affecting mood and behaviour. However, having said this, it was also suggested to us that

any breakfast is better than no breakfast at all.¹ (Suggestions for healthy breakfast ideas can be found in the Food in Schools Toolkit at www.foodinschools.org)

Breakfast clubs

5.3 We found that the number of schools with breakfast clubs varied enormously as can be seen from the chart below. Where breakfast clubs exist their popularity is often fairly low. In addition, some clubs were only run for year 6 pupils in SATs week. (This in itself is an indicator of the widely acknowledged impact of breakfast on concentration.) The majority of schools stated that up to 10% of pupils used the breakfast club, with the maximum usage being up to 40% but only in the case of one school.



5.4 Given the evidence we heard about the positive impact of eating breakfast, the idea of setting up more school breakfast clubs initially seemed like a really good step forward, and for some areas of the county this may be the case. However, our findings show that the success of such clubs will depend on a number of factors like whether the area is urban or rural, demography, need and parental buy in. Given the Government's ten year Extended Schools Agenda, which will gradually see an increase in the number of breakfast clubs, we feel that it is not necessary at this stage to recommend breakfast clubs for all schools. Where breakfast clubs are being run, we would suggest that due consideration is given to including low GI foods on the menu.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that schools provide information to parents and children highlighting the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast.

¹ Professor David Benton, Department of Psychology, University of Wales, Swansea

Mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks

- 5.5 As well as the contents of meals and snacks, their timing also appears to have an influence on children's behaviour. The task group heard on many occasions about the positive impact on pupil behaviour and concentration of a healthy mid-morning snack, which maintained blood sugar levels. Most children have a morning break during which they can have a snack. Many primary school pupils are only allowed healthy snacks of fruit or vegetable with water or milk at morning break. The picture is slightly different with middle and high school children. Some schools have tuck shops, which offer some healthy options, others are working towards phasing in Healthy Tuck Shops and some schools offer snacks via the school kitchen. One school told us about the "brunch" that they offered. Alternatively, of course, snacks can be brought in from home.
- 5.6 The evidence confirming the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast and/or a healthy mid-morning snack in order to stabilise blood sugar levels is growing. The task group was particularly interested to hear from Professor Benton about his view that the benefits of eating a healthy snack could be extended to the afternoon. Incorporating an afternoon snack into the school day could avoid the mid-afternoon dip in blood sugar levels and the consequent dip in concentration levels and standards of behaviour. (Of course, this needs to be seen in the context of rising levels of obesity amongst school children. We would not suggest that children should be eating more food, rather that it should be redistributed throughout the school day. Again, suggestions for healthy snacks can be found in the Food in Schools Toolkit at www.foodinschools.org) We have evidence from a school that has re-organised its day in this way and found a marked improvement in behaviour and concentration. We recognise that, for some schools, the introduction of an afternoon break may cause timetabling issues but feel that the potential to improve pupil concentration and behaviour should be explored.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that primary schools consider incorporating an afternoon break into the timetable to allow pupils to have a healthy snack in the afternoon. We also recommend that high schools consider having two substantial breaks in the day. This would avoid dips in blood sugar and therefore allow pupils to more easily maintain levels of concentration.

Healthy snacks

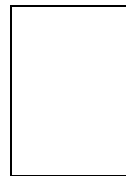
- 5.7 At an early point in our scrutiny exercise, we became concerned about the unhealthy nature of the breaktime snacks consumed by many pupils, particularly in middle and high schools. Often these snacks are bought from school tuck shops or from sponsored vending machines and may be high in fat, sugar and/or salt.
- 5.8 In October 2005, as a result of the *Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food* report by the independent School Meals Review Panel, the

Government announced that from September 2006 chocolate, crisps and sugary fizzy drinks would effectively be banned from school vending machines, tuck shops and cafeterias. We very much welcome this move and the speed with which the ban will be introduced. Although the primary reason for the ban appears to be concern about levels of childhood obesity, we hope that access to healthier snacks will also lead to more balanced blood sugar levels and have a positive impact on concentration and behaviour.

- 5.9 The LA's Catering Team and the Healthy Schools Team will monitor this in the County's schools and will work in partnership to offer support and advice to schools implementing the changes. In the course of our investigations we found that some schools in the County have already taken this step and have started to sell healthy alternatives. Some have also advised parents not to provide these items in packed lunches.

Recommendation 4

The task group welcomes the Government ban on fizzy drinks, chocolate and crisps and the moves by some schools to reduce their availability ahead of the ban. Furthermore, we recommend that the Local Authority issues guidance to all schools that fizzy drinks, chocolate and crisps should not be included in packed lunches.



The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

- 5.10 The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, which complements the National Healthy School Standard, is part of a national initiative to encourage everyone to eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day. The scheme entitles all 4 to 6 year olds to a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day. The scheme has been funded by the Department of Health from January 2004 for 2 years but, at the time of writing, the future of funding is unclear with many contracts ending in March 2006. Initial evaluation has suggested that the scheme has not encouraged children to significantly increase their intake of fruit and vegetables.
- 5.11 However, we found that the scheme is very popular with teachers, parents and children alike and has given children the opportunity to try more fruit and vegetables thus contributing towards 5 portions per day. Children are given the opportunity to try different varieties of fruit and vegetables helping to develop good eating habits at an early age.
- 5.12 All of our eligible schools that responded to the questionnaire participate in the scheme, with some schools offering other year groups any remaining fruit. One high school now provides free fruit for the whole school. Many schools we talked to asked for this popular scheme to be expanded. We recognise that this would have significant financial implications for the Local

Authority but believe that it would reinforce the healthy eating message as children move into Key Stage 2.

Recommendation 5

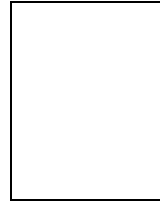
We recommend that the Local Authority considers extending the very popular free fruit and vegetable scheme to provide fruit or vegetables for all Key Stage 2 pupils as well. Wherever possible, contracts should be negotiated with Worcestershire fruit and vegetable growers for whole fruit of a size appropriate to a child's appetite.

Milk

- 5.13 Milk is a naturally nutritious and additive-free drink. It is a good source of calcium and kind to teeth. While we are encouraging children to increase the amount of natural, healthy, additive free food and drink they consume and not to drink sweet, fizzy and calorie and additive laden drinks, the task group feels that children should be given every available opportunity to drink milk.
- 5.14 We are aware that local authorities are not obliged to provide milk to pupils, but if they choose to do so, it must be free to those pupils who qualify for free school meals. Under the Welfare Food Scheme, run by the Department of Health, under fives are also eligible for free school milk. Under European Community subsidy rules local authorities and schools are allowed to offer nursery and primary school pupils a maximum of 250 ml of subsidised milk a day.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that, as part of the drive towards healthy eating and drinking, parents should be given the option to purchase milk for their child throughout primary years and that it should be available in high school restaurants, vending machines and tuck shops.



6. School Lunches

A universal hot meals service

- 6.1 While the task group was in the process of gathering its evidence, the Government announced additional funding for school meals. For Worcestershire this amounted to an additional £300,000 for the Local Authority and £350,000 for schools. (Each grant is per year for three years.) We very much welcome this additional funding (recognising that it is on a time limited basis) although we have some concerns that the funding to schools is not ring fenced. We especially welcome the fact that that it is conditional on the Local Authority having a plan in place by September 2008 for reintroducing a hot meals service in all schools. Our findings suggest that schools, in general, are keen to do this.
- 6.2 We are aware that the Local Authority is currently working on its plans for the reintroduction of a hot meals service. We look forward to seeing these plans and suggest that the following options are considered:
- Kitchens should be reintroduced wherever possible (although we understand that accommodation issues and the potentially significant cost would make this impossible for all schools);
 - Schools with large enough kitchens (primarily High Schools) should be used as 'hubs' to cook food and distribute it to other local schools. We visited schools where this has already been done effectively and we were very impressed by the results. Although some concerns were expressed that this might not be so effective a solution in rural areas where transport costs would be higher and standards and quality might suffer when food had been transported over relatively long distances, we were reassured that modern containers can keep food hot and appetising for some time and over substantial distances;
 - The Local Authority should investigate whether local catering establishments, including pubs, restaurants and cafes would be able or willing to provide meals to schools;
 - Members of the task group were impressed by the cashless payment system that some schools have introduced for school meals. This has the double advantage of removing any stigma associated with free school meals and allowing parents to monitor what their children are eating (by way of a printout). We recognise that to introduce such a system in all schools would be prohibitively expensive, but we suggest that the Local Authority should consider introducing a cashless payment system wherever possible.

6.3 We were pleased to hear that such issues are already part of the discussions and considerations in new schools build, such as the PFI contract in Bromsgrove and the proposals for the Wyre Forest re-organisation.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Steering Committee be given the opportunity to review and comment on the Local Authority's plans for the reintroduction of a universal hot meal service.



Free School Meals Allowance

6.4 We were informed that the Local Authority plans to use some of the additional money from Government to increase the free school meals allowance from £1.30 this year to £1.50 in 2006/7 (£1.60 in special schools) and £1.70 in all schools from April 2007. Although we welcome these proposals, we still have concerns that the allowance is less than some other authorities (for example Somerset's allowance is £1.87). We therefore urge the Authority to consider increasing the allowance further.



Packed lunches

6.5 Of course, the meals served in school dining halls provide only part of the food that pupils consume whilst in school. Of the primary schools that responded to our questionnaire, 50% did not currently provide a hot meal at lunchtime and for pupils at these schools or for pupils who have chosen not to have hot school meals, lunch consists of a packed lunch brought from home. It is a common misconception that packed lunches brought from home provide a healthier choice than a school meal. The Food Standards Agency School Lunchbox Surveys 2004 and 2005 found that many lunch boxes contained food with high levels of fat, sugar and salt. It was suggested to the task group that often there was room for improvement in the nutritional content of lunchboxes and snacks brought from home.

6.6 The results of our consultation with schools show clearly that many schools have already undertaken much good work with parents to improve the nutritional content of lunchboxes. Often this has been done as a result of the Healthy Schools Programme which in the case of 16 of our first and primary schools has provided additional support through the work of Great Grub. Ideas that were suggested to us included stickers and rewards for pupils who bring in (and eat!) healthy options, and workshops and tasting sessions for parents and children. However, this good practice has often been undertaken by individual schools working on their own initiative. Schools also reminded the Task group that this issue needed to be handled

sensitively in order to avoid offending parents and suggested that information and advice for parents from the Local Authority (ie at one removed from the school) would be helpful.

- 6.7 It is important that the Local Authority works in partnership with parents to help them make informed decisions about what their children are eating during the school day. Our findings show that schools would welcome an information pack to share with parents containing practical advice about the importance of breakfast and suggestions for healthy snacks and lunch boxes. Evidence suggests that parents would welcome (or be particularly receptive to) such advice when their children enter the reception year at age four or five. Schools would also welcome advice from the Local Authority on how else to work with parents to encourage healthier lunch boxes.
- 6.8 The Task Group is aware that the Department of Health is currently developing guidance for schools to offer to parents as part of the extensions to the Food in Schools toolkit. This guidance will include the benefits and significance of breakfast for health, concentration and achievement. Similarly, we understand that involving parents in making healthy food choices is part of the criteria for the Healthy Eating core theme of the National Healthy Schools Programme and as such, many schools will be doing this already. However, we feel that there is a need for more widespread practical advice to target all schools including those who are not currently working toward fulfilling the criteria for this core theme.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the Local Authority produces an information pack to share with parents, containing practical advice about the importance of breakfast and suggestions for healthy snacks and lunch boxes. We would suggest that parents would be particularly receptive to such advice when their children enter the reception year at age four or five.

The social side of meals

- 6.9 We also heard evidence about how schools develop pupils' social skills through schools meals. Our special schools in particular place a strong emphasis on eating together and making meals a 'family' occasion, which can have a positive influence on pupils' social skills and behaviour. We also found that some schools have special occasion meals from time to time, for instance at Christmas and other key times of celebration. At one primary school all pupils and staff sit down once a month to a hot lunch in the local village hall prepared by parent volunteers using locally sourced ingredients. This has proved to be a very popular and sociable occasion for the school.
- 6.10 However, in many schools we found that this was not a priority for a number of reasons, including:
- insufficient space in dining areas for the children to sit at a table to eat lunch;
 - poorly equipped dining areas;

- a short amount of time available to feed large numbers of pupils;
- many other demanding priorities for staff;
- pupils seeing lunch as a time to eat as quickly as possible and get outside to play.

6.11 Research has shown that improvements in the dining room environment can increase social interaction of pupils, reduce noise and lead to better behaviour at lunch times and increased school lunch take up by pupils and staff. Although we recognise that current resources are not sufficient to allow all schools to refurbish their dining facilities, we feel that it is important for schools to consider whether the state of their current dining hall is appropriate or could be improved. The importance of providing a welcoming dining environment is also recognised in the criteria for being a full status healthy school.

6.12 Given the decline in the number of families eating together at home, lunch at school may be the only time some children sit down to a meal as a social occasion. Although we recognise that some children either go home or leave the school campus during their lunch break, we are concerned that for many children lunch is something to be eaten as quickly as possible in a race to be the first outside to play. We suggest that schools could take steps to encourage children to sit down and experience the meal as a social occasion.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that schools ensure that all pupils spend at least 20 minutes eating lunch to avoid the race to get out and play. This would give children the opportunity to experience the mealtime as a social occasion, thus improving social skills and encouraging calmer behaviour.

New nutritional standards

6.13 In September 2005 the independent School Meals Review Panel published *Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food*, a report on the development and implementation of nutritional standards for school lunches. The report, which was welcomed by the Government, recommended redesigning the nation's school menus to set new minimum standards for food in schools and ensuring pupils get essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals.

6.14 Following the publication of the report there was a 13-week consultation period on the proposed new standards. At the time of writing, the Department for Education and Skills is analysing the consultation responses and plans that the new standards will be announced in May 2006 and come in to force from the Autumn term of 2006. Once the new standards are published we feel it will be essential for the Local Authority to support schools and catering companies in their implementation. In this context, we welcome the recruitment of two School Meal Advisors (who, we are informed, will be in post by May 2006) to provide guidance and support to schools and monitor catering contractors.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the Local Authority should investigate ways to support schools and catering companies in implementing the new nutritional guidelines that the Government is currently consulting on, which will come into force from September 2006.

Training for catering staff

6.15 If schools are to genuinely transform their school meals provision, catering staff will be key. The move away from processed food to more food prepared from basic ingredients has made the provision of school lunches much more labour intensive. All of this has major implications for the skill levels and number of hours worked by catering staff.

6.16 When we met with catering companies, training for staff was highlighted as a major issue. In the majority of cases, staff receive a bare minimum of manual handling and hygiene training only. Offering kitchen staff the opportunity for certification and further training would enhance their job satisfaction and encourage staff retention.

6.17 In discussions with Liz Eyre, the County Council's Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children's Services, and Colin Weeden, the Head of Policy Development and Quality Assurance, we were pleased to learn that the Local Authority plans to spend some of the extra funding provided by Government on developing training programmes and materials for:

- School meal staff and private caterers
- Teachers and support staff
- Parents
- Children and young people

6.18 We also very much welcome the news from Denise Mortimore that, since the start of the scrutiny, the University of Worcester has organised Royal Society for the Promotion of Health Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced courses to county schools. The courses will be open not only to catering staff, but to teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime staff, chairs of School Nutrition Action Groups (SNAGs) and anyone else who is interested in improving their knowledge of nutrition. A leaflet advertising the courses will be sent to schools at the start of summer term 2006 and courses will be held in the summer.

6.19 When skills and awareness levels have been raised, schools providing a healthy choice of food can apply for the Healthy Heartbeat Award. This scheme is administered by the local authority and recognises the skills of

catering staff and gains prestige for the school while indicating to pupils and parents that they are being offered high quality food. We are aware that some of our schools have already gained this award and we feel that, in time, all schools should be working towards it.

Recommendation 11

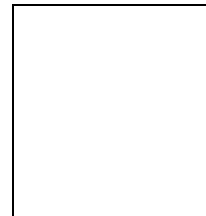
We very much welcome the funding that the Local Authority plans to use for training for the people who produce the food that our children eat in schools. We recommend that the Authority should aim to reach a position where all school catering staff receive basic nutritional training.

6.20 Our discussions with catering companies revealed that all providers are facing the same or similar issues in attempting to improve the quality and healthy nature of school meals. We understand that the LA's catering officer has regular meetings with all contractors on an individual basis and has recently met with all of the County's main contractors together. We welcome this and would wish, in particular, to see the meeting of all caterers repeated on an annual basis.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that the Local Authority should facilitate an annual meeting of caterers working in the County to allow them to discuss concerns and share best practice.

Procurement



6.21 Although not directly related to healthy eating, a number of schools raised the issue of procurement with us. In the interests of improving efficiency and gaining greater value for money it was suggested to us that groups of schools could join together to buy produce in bulk. In doing so they may be able to negotiate better contracts with suppliers than if they were buying alone. Indeed, our investigations revealed that some special schools already do this and two private schools in the County have linked to form a buying consortium. Of course, where catering companies are responsible for the procurement of supplies for several contracts, they already purchase as a group.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that the Local Authority should further investigate the potential for joint procurement to allow groups of schools to negotiate better deals with suppliers.

6.22 The task group heard from several schools and catering companies who felt it was good practice to ensure that, as far as possible, produce was sourced locally. Not only does this provide a boost to the local economy and support local farmers and growers, it also promotes sustainability. A number of schools mentioned this point in reference to their involvement in the eco schools initiative. (Eco schools is an awards scheme that gets everyone in the school community involved in making the school environment better.) In this context, we also heard about the work that the Worcestershire rural hub is undertaking with caterers to support locally sourced products. It is fully supporting 'The Green Grocer', a cooperative of farmers and local suppliers who are based in Evesham and aim to distribute to schools.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that all schools and catering companies be encouraged to follow the good practice of buying locally sourced produce from Worcestershire growers.

6.23 We also heard evidence of the positive benefits to children's healthy eating habits of involving children in growing their own food. Our attention was drawn to the Growing Schools website (teachernet.gov.uk/growing-schools/) which aims to reconnect young people with their environment, in both urban and rural settings, through the National Curriculum. The Growing Schools programme aims to harness the full potential of the outdoor classroom as a teaching and learning resource.

Recommendation 15

We also recommend that, as part of the educational experience, schools should be encouraged to grow some of their own food where feasible.

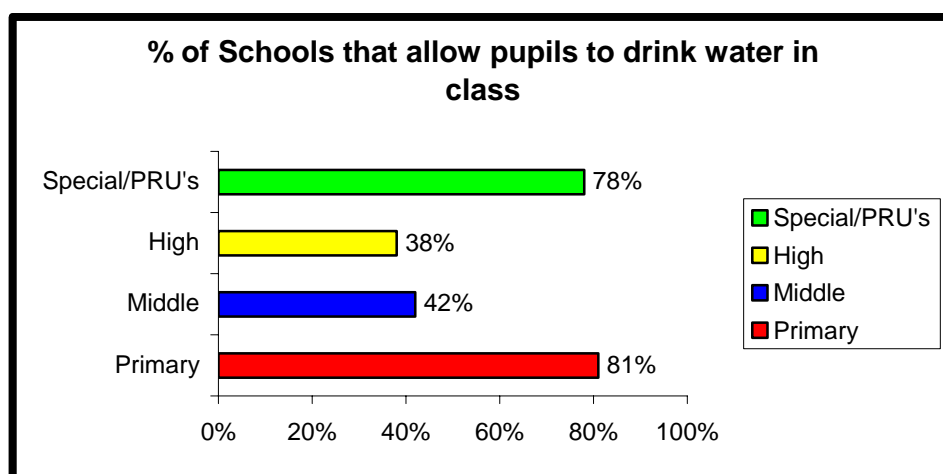
7. Water

7.1 The health benefits of drinking water are widely acknowledged by health professionals and the Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools recommends that drinking water should be available to pupils throughout the day at a number of points within a school and not from taps or drinking fountains in the toilets. Dave Traxson, Senior Educational Psychologist told the task group that a 2% drop in hydration could lead to a 20% drop in performance (both socially and academically)². However, Professor David Benton said that there was no evidence to support the suggestion that drinking water improves concentration except in cases of severe dehydration which was unlikely in our temperate climate.

² Ian Smith, Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum

7.2 We found responses to our questionnaire on this issue were very positive and encouraging. All of the primary, high and special schools and 75% of the middle schools that responded to our questionnaire had a water policy. We did however find differences in the way in which the policy was applied. Some schools actively encourage pupils to sip water throughout the day whereas others only had water fountains, which in some cases were located in toilets. We have concerns about this and believe that the siting of water fountains should be given further consideration.

7.3 The chart below shows the percentage of schools that allow pupils to drink water in class. Although 81% of primary schools who responded allow water to be drunk in the classroom this falls to 38% in high schools (although we acknowledge that the greater use of specialist equipment such as scientific and ICT equipment may be the reason for this).



7.4 Although the majority of evidence seen by the task group suggests that the increased drinking of water has a positive effect on children's behaviour and ability to concentrate, we acknowledge that for some schools it raises other issues. Some were concerned about the increased disruption to lessons caused by more frequent trips to the toilet, whereas others pointed out that the emptying and washing of water bottles created an additional job for already busy staff. The task group recognises the need to ensure water bottles are hygienically cleaned and stored and understands that allowing all children to have water bottles may require schools to take on the additional task of emptying and cleaning the bottles. Similarly, we are aware that having children leave the classroom to visit the toilet will cause some interruptions to lessons. However, we feel that the benefits to pupils, in terms of increased concentration, outweigh the additional work and disruption.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that all schools in the County should have a consistent approach to drinking water in school. Children should be allowed bottles of water in the classroom and be actively encouraged to sip water throughout the day.

8. Promoting the Healthy Eating Message



The National Healthy Schools Programme

8.1 A major theme that emerged from the responses to our questionnaire and from evidence received from Local Authority officers was the importance of a whole school approach to healthy eating. Schools that have been successful in this area have recognised that the healthy eating message is not simply an issue for lunchtime – it can be incorporated in many areas of the school's life and curriculum. Indeed this is the basis of National Healthy School Programme. The NHSP guide for schools states that:

'The whole-school approach:

- *aims to develop an ethos and environment that supports learning and promotes the health and well-being of all;*
- *consults and encourages participation of all within the school community; and*
- *is an extremely effective, evidence-based school improvement mechanism which brings about and embeds cultural change in schools.'*

8.2 Evidence on the NHSS website www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk shows that pupils who are healthy also achieve well at school and the NHSS whole school approach can bring about sustained school improvement.

8.3 The National Healthy School Standard (NHSS) was launched in Worcestershire in 2001. The Worcestershire programme is based on a partnership between education and health, which was accredited to the national standard in November 2001. By 2005 65% of County schools were registered to the programme and the Government's target is that by December 2006 over 50% of Worcestershire schools will have achieved new healthy school status. By 2009, the Government wants every school to be working towards achieving National Healthy School status. The National Healthy Schools Programme contains four core themes one of which is healthy eating. The criteria for this theme are included in full at appendix 6.

8.4 At an early stage in the scrutiny process, the task group heard evidence from the Local Authority's Healthy Schools Coordinator and we were very impressed by the good work being undertaken. We commend the focus on

taking a whole school approach and welcome the Authority's and the Government's intention to extend this good practice into more schools.

8.5 The task group also welcomed the work of the Wyre Forest Healthy Food in Schools Project, a joint project run by Wyre Forest District Council and Wyre Forest Primary Care Trust and funded by the Food Standards Agency. The project has worked with pupils, staff and parents from six first and middle schools to develop good eating habits and improve knowledge of food hygiene.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that schools should continue to adopt a whole school approach to healthy eating and promote the healthy eating message wherever possible throughout school life.

The wider promotion of the healthy eating message

8.6 The task group welcomes the excellent work already being undertaken by the Healthy Schools team in promoting healthy eating within schools and the fact that the Local Authority plans to spend some of £300,000 grant from Government on developing promotional material.

8.7 However, a message that the task group received from many schools was that they would welcome more support from the Local Authority in terms of the wider promotion of the healthy eating message to both parents and pupils. Suggestions as to how this might be done were many and varied and included:

- Providing materials to promote healthy eating messages beyond schools, e.g. in supermarkets and in newspapers;
- Providing posters to contribute to the whole school promotion of the healthy eating message;
- Invite celebrity chefs (or other celebrities) to the County to talk to schools and inspire pupils;
- Set up a Worcestershire 'Young Chef of the Year' competition;
- Invite drama groups into schools in the County.

8.8 We believe that improving the eating habits of the County's schoolchildren is a long-term goal and feel that the promotion of consistent messages about healthy eating will contribute to this aim.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that the Local Authority adopts a wider and more varied approach to promoting healthy eating to parents and pupils including a publicity campaign beyond schools eg in supermarkets, newspapers and through drama presentations.

Engaging young people

- 8.9 Any proposals to improve school meals and encourage healthy eating will only be successful if pupils are motivated and involved in the planning and implementation. Schools have told us of the importance of talking to pupils of all ages. Pupils from Nunnery Wood High School and Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College told us that, in their schools, the school council gets involved in planning lunch menus and this was seen as crucial to the success of initiatives to increase take up of hot meals.
- 8.10 A member of the task group also visited Manor Park Special School in Worcester where, periodically, the older children were involved in planning, cooking and serving a meal. They lay tables and all sit down to the meal at the same time. This has proved to be a very successful initiative helping the pupils to develop their life and social skills.
- 8.11 As well as promoting healthy eating through lessons, many schools have come up with innovative ways of highlighting the message. These include inviting drama groups and outside speakers into schools. We support this innovation and would like to see this good practice shared with other schools.

Recommendation 19

We recommend that the Local Authority facilitates the sharing of the good practice that is already happening in a number of schools to engage young people with the healthy eating message.

Monitoring by the Governing Body

- 8.12 The National Governors' Council suggests that it is good practice for schools to have a named governor with a special interest in healthy eating in schools. Similarly, the healthy schools criteria require a link governor (who is interviewed as part of the validation process) and that the school adopts a 'Whole School Food Policy'. We feel that school governing bodies can have an important influence on how healthy eating is promoted in the school and can bring together parents and schools to initiate change and ensure communication with parents is effective. We were pleased to learn that the LA's catering team is developing a governor's course to deliver comprehensive training on the healthy schools programme and that four dates are planned for 2006.

Recommendation 20

We recommend that, as suggested by the National Governors' Council, all schools have a named governor with a special interest in healthy eating in schools.



Developing the County Council website

8.13 Many of the recommendations we have made relate to the expansion and clarification of the information and support that the Local Authority provides to schools, parents and pupils, and to the sharing of best practice. Much of this sharing and dissemination of information could be achieved through an improved and enhanced County Council website (possibly as part of the Worcestershire Grid for Learning). This should also include links to other useful websites such as the Food in Schools site, the 5-a-day site, Teachernet and Jamie Oliver's School Dinners site. The website should also provide a forum for schools to share best practice and receive advice from fellow professionals.

Recommendation 21

We recommend that the County Council website be expanded to bring together the information on healthy eating that the Local Authority provides to schools, parents and pupils in one easily accessible place.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 In conclusion, the task group has found insufficient evidence to prove that what children eat and drink affects their behaviour, although there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some children may be affected some of the time.
- 9.2 Throughout our scrutiny we have been impressed by the excellent work that schools and the Local Authority are already undertaking and we hope that our report will reinforce the good work already happening and go some way to ironing out inconsistencies and spreading good practice.
- 9.3 We are very aware that improving the food that children eat during the school day is only part of ensuring a healthy diet. However, we hope that the good habits developed at school will positively influence children's choices and that of their families at other times.

**HEALTHY EATING IN WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS
SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOLS

School:	
Name and position of person completing questionnaire:	

Question 1:

How does your school promote the healthy eating message? Which lessons are used? How successful is this?

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Question 2:

What guidance has your school received on healthy eating?

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Question 3:

Is your school taking part in the Healthy Schools Programme?

Question 4:

Does the school have a breakfast club? If so, what proportion of children attend?

Question 5:

Does the school have a tuck shop or vending machine? If so, does the school have a policy relating to healthy eating and items sold in the shop/machine?

Question 6:

Does your school have a kitchen? If so, is it used?

Question 7:

Do you offer a hot meal service at school? If so who produces the meal eg external caterers, own staff or other? Does the menu offer only healthy options and are the ingredients locally sourced where possible? How many children take a hot meal?

Question 8:

Do you offer a packed lunch service or do children bring their own? If children bring their own lunch do you encourage them to include healthy options and avoid sweets, crisps, chocolate and processed food?

Question 9:

How many children are entitled to free school meals? How many children actually take free school meals?

Question 10:

Do teachers feel that pupils' behaviour changes after lunch? If the school has made any changes to lunch provision, have these changes affected pupils' behaviour?

Question 11:

The DfES recommends that drinking water should be available all day to all pupils free of charge. Does the school have a policy on provision of drinking water for pupils throughout the day? If so, what impact does this have on pupil behaviour?

Question 12: (Primary Schools only)

All 4-6 year olds in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Does the school participate in the free fruit scheme? If not, what are the reasons for not participating?

Question 13:

Does the school's governing body monitor school meal provision?

Question 14:

What more could the County Council do to help you in promoting healthy eating in the school?

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire. Your views and comments will be used to inform Worcestershire County Council's scrutiny of Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools. A copy of the final scrutiny report will be sent to you on completion. If, in the meantime, you have any questions or would like further information about the scrutiny please contact Samantha Morris or Alyson Grice on (01905) 766619. Email: sjmorris@worcestershire.gov.uk or agrice@worcestershire.gov.uk

Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools Scrutiny Task Group

Summary of questionnaires received from schools

<i>Type of school</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Questionnaires received</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
All schools	269	150	56%
Primary	186	106	57%
Middle	33	19	58%
High	30	16	53%
Special	11	5	45%
PRUs	9	4	44%

Only includes questionnaires where school is identified

Analysis of Questionnaires - Primary schools

Total Number of Schools: 106

Question 1:

How does your school promote the healthy eating message? Which lessons are used? How successful is this?

Promoting the Healthy eating message	No of Schools
PSHE/C/Circle time	80
Science	74
Healthy snack at morning break/free fruit scheme	48
Food Technology/DT	28
School Assembly	20
Parents Evenings/PTA/ Events for parents	18
Encouraging healthy lunchboxes	16
Cross Curriculum/Whole School Approach	15
Healthy Schools Programme	14
Water available	13
School menu/policy/ethos	12
Rewards/stickers for healthy eating at lunchtime	12
Health week	12
School Council	11
PE	10
School nurse	9
Parents Newsletter	9
Promotion Events	7
School Displays	6
Milk available	6
Eco club/Eco school	6
Induction meetings with parents	5
Prospectus	4
Great Grub project	4
Tasting sessions	3
Literacy	3
Healthy Tuck Shop	3
Grow own fruit and veg	3
Staff lead by example	2
Maths/numeracy	3
Art	2
School Working Party	1
Religious Education	2
Monthly hot lunch provided by parents	1
Knowledge and Understanding of the	1

World (Foundation stage)	
ICT	1
History	1
Health Education lessons	1
Geography	1
Forest School	1
Buy organic/tradecraft products	1
Life Caravan	1
Healthy Eating Week	1
Healthy Eating Tuck Shop	

Question 2:

What guidance has your school received on healthy eating?

Guidance Received by Schools	No of Schools
Healthy Schools Programme	43
School Nurse	31
LEA	21
DfES	13
None	8
Free fruit and veg scheme	7
Catering Company	5
Great grub project	5
Lots!	6
National Curriculum/QCA	4
Governor involvement	4
Supermarkets	4
Commercial companies	4
NHS	4
Little	4
Life Caravan	3
Dental Hygienist	3
Jamie Oliver	2
PTA/NCPTA	2
Own knowledge as adults	1
Nutritionist	1
Internet	1
ICT Programmes	1
Touchwood Training	1
Unable to comment	1

Question 3:

Is your school taking part in the Healthy Schools Programme?

	No of Schools	%
Schools participating in Healthy Schools Programme	87	82%
Schools not yet participating in Healthy Schools Programme	19	18%

Question 4:

Does the school have a breakfast club? If so, what proportion of children attend?

	No of Schools	%
School has a Breakfast Club	27	26%
School does not have a Breakfast Club	79	74%

The popularity of the breakfast clubs varied enormously. Figures quoted were between 2% and 35% attending. Some clubs were not run by the schools themselves, but by private companies (nurseries). Some schools ran clubs for Y6 pupils at time of SATs.

Question 5:

Does the school have a tuck shop or vending machine? If so, does the school have a policy relating to healthy eating and items sold in the shop/machine?

	No of Schools	%
Tuck Shop		
- All Healthy Options	10	9
- Some Healthy options	3	3
No Tuck shop, vending machine or school snacks	92	87
No tuck shop or vending machine but milk/fruit sold at morning break	1	1

Comment: Tuck shop is 'significant source of PTA funds'.

Question 6:

Does your school have a kitchen? If so, is it used?

	No of Schools	%
Yes, school kitchen used to cook hot meals	18*	17
Yes, school kitchen used to serve hot meals prepared elsewhere	5	5
Yes, school kitchen used for cookery lessons/snack preparation only	15	14
School kitchen unused	2	2
No school kitchen	66	62

*One schools only uses its kitchen to serve a hot meal once a fortnight

Question 7:

Do you offer a hot meal service at school? If so who produces the meal eg external caterers, own staff or other? Does the menu offer only healthy options and are the ingredients locally sourced where possible? How many children take a hot meal?

Do you offer a hot meal service?	No of Schools	%
Yes	53*	50
No	53	50
If so who produces the meal?		
External Caterers – Meal produced on site	15	28
External Caterers – Meals Transported	34	64
Meals cooked in house	4	8
Do you offer some healthy options?		
Yes	45	85
No	7	13
Didn't Say	1	2
Is produce sourced locally?		
Yes	14	
No	3	
Didn't Say	1	

*Of these 52 one school offers a hot meal once a month only and another once a fortnight only.

Comments: Difficult to get external caterers to provide meals to very small primary/first schools.

Question 8:

Do you offer a packed lunch service or do children bring their own? If children bring their own lunch do you encourage them to include healthy options and avoid sweets, crisps, chocolate and processed food?

Do you offer a packed lunch service (other than for free school meals)?	No of Schools	%
Yes	10	9
No	93	88
Didn't say	3	3
Do you encourage children not to bring crisps, sweets, chocolate & fizzy drinks in their packed lunches?		
Yes	95	90
No	3	3
Didn't Say	8	8

Comments:

'Gentle persuasion.' 'Contents of lunchboxes are an area of concern.'
'Healthy choices encouraged but not always evident.'
'Parents have final say on what is in the box.'
'Once a term we have a waste free lunch day.'
'We try to encourage healthy packed lunch but this is up to parents.'
'Teachers sometimes model by showing own lunchboxes.'
'I feel many children are bringing lunch foods that lead to behaviour problems.'
'Stickers to reward healthy options. Limited success – children are very aware, parents less so!'
'Difficult area. Can't enforce if parents do not want to & they can become quite animated.'

Question 9:

How many children are entitled to free school meals? How many children actually take free school meals?

The main messages from answers to this question were:

- Difficult for schools to be certain of the numbers of pupils entitled to FSM;

- Many schools (48) felt that more pupils were entitled that actually took FSM;
- A few schools were undertaking measures to encourage greater take up of FSM;
- One school reported that take up 'trebled overnight when we introduced hot meals'.

Question 10:

Do teachers feel that pupils' behaviour changes after lunch? If the school has made any changes to lunch provision, have these changes affected pupils' behaviour?

Do teachers feel that pupils behaviour changes after lunch?	No of Schools	%
Yes, behaviour worsens	35	
Yes, behaviour worsens for some/particular children	10	
Yes, behaviour improves	1	
No change	25	
Not noticed	4	
Don't know	11	
Not answered	7	
If the school has changed to a healthier option menu, has pupil behaviour improved?		
Yes	14	
No		
Didn't say	3	
Behaviour worse due to weather	3	

Question was answered in a wide variety of ways (mainly due to imprecise nature of the question). Comments included:

- The children are much more lively straight after lunch.
- Children whose lunch boxes contain less healthy options sometimes exhibit hyperactive tendencies.
- Pupils' behaviour does change after lunch but it is mainly due to their time spent on the playground.
- Less attentive and more lethargic.
- Difficult to judge whether change in behaviour is due to tired children, the effect of running around or food.
- Behaviour after lunch has improved since the appointment of play leaders and purchase of play equipment.
- (Children) can be affected by the weather eg windy/wet play.
- Teachers generally feel that children's concentration is poorer in the afternoon, but this is due to a number of factors which we are sure will include what they have eaten,
- Change from cooked meals led to less disruptive behaviour after lunch.

- Children’s concentration span is better before lunch.
- Observation provides clear evidence of increased inappropriate behaviour as a result of high sugar intake through packed lunches.
- Afternoons are more difficult in general. Some may be due to diet – others age/attention level of the child.

Question 11:

The DfES recommends that drinking water should be available all day to all pupils free of charge. Does the school have a policy on provision of drinking water for pupils throughout the day? If so, what impact does this have on pupil behaviour?

Do you have a water policy	No of Schools	%
Yes	104	98
No	2	2
Pupils can drink in class	86	81
Pupils can’t drink in class	5	5
Didn’t say	15	14
If so, do you think it has a positive impact on pupil behaviour		
Yes	26	25
No	12	11
Don’t know	10	9
Didn’t answer the question	58	55

Comments included

One other comment on drinking water was that it leads to more frequent trips to the toilet.

Although 97% of schools said that they had a water policy, there was a lack of consistency in the interpretation of the policy eg some schools allow water bottles in class and actively encourage children to sip water throughout the day and others only had water fountains available in schools and didn’t allow drinking in class. In one school, the policy varied on a class by class basis.

Question 12: (Primary Schools only)

All 4-6 year olds in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Does the school participate in the free fruit scheme? If not, what are the reasons for not participating?

- 104 schools participated in the free fruit and vegetable scheme (2 schools were not eligible as they were nursery schools)
- One school provides fruit for older children
- Many schools offer remaining fruit to other year groups and asked if the

scheme could be extended to older children, overall it was a very popular scheme.

Question 13:

Does the school's governing body monitor school meal provision?

	No of Schools	%
Yes	63	59
No	41	39
Didn't answer question	1	1

Some schools reported that the Governing Body didn't formally monitor school meal provision, but that governors were aware of the provision and supported healthy eating.

Question 14:

What more could the County Council do to help you in promoting healthy eating in the school?

Kitchen/Dining Facilities
Reintroduce the hot school meals service*
Reinstate school kitchens/assist with funding for kitchens/dining facilities *
Guidance on reinstallation of school kitchens
Provide schools with details of recommended caterers
Parents
Education/awareness for parents from County detailing the importance of
Lunch box suggestions for parents*
Parent workshops
Breakfast Clubs
Provide facilities for a breakfast club
Funding
Subsidise school meals
Fund free school meals
Provide funding for water filtration systems
Training and resources for use in Science/PHSE
Curriculum Issues/Promotion of Healthy Eating
Expand the free fruit scheme to all children*
Posters for school*
Provide all children with free water bottles
Provide free milk for all children
Invite Jamie Oliver to Worcestershire and "make it happen", be proactive
Give presentations/visits to schools
Encourage schools to put cookery on syllabus
To encourage children to cook have a Worcs Young Chef of the Year

Produce recipe books designed by children
Consider whether healthy eating should be promoted or dictated
Courses for Staff
Training for kitchen staff
Other
Simplify the process for gaining healthy schools status
Consider introducing a county wide policy re: crisps, chocolate, sweets and processed foods
Regular contact with Great Grub Project
More support staff at county level
Arrange for schools to share best practice
Monitor the quality of hot meals provided by external caterers
*Very popular suggestion

Middle schools - Total Number of Schools: 19

Question 1:

How does your school promote the healthy eating message? Which lessons are used? How successful is this?

Promoting the Healthy eating message	No of Schools
PHSE/C	17
Food Technology	11
Science	10
School Assembly	6
School menu/policy	5
Parents Newsletter	4
School Displays	4
PE	3
Healthy Schools Programme	3
School Council	2
Whole School Approach	2
Parents Evenings	2
Promotion Events	2
Healthy Tuck Shop	1
Water Bottles	1

Question 2:

What guidance has your school received on healthy eating?

Guidance Received by Schools	No of Schools
Healthy Schools Programme	12
Catering Company	2
None	2
Healthy Schools Website	1
School Nurse	1
Soil Society	1
Local Suppliers	1
National Curriculum	1
British Nutrition Association	1
Pathfinder	1
PHSE Co-ordinator	1
Food in Schools Toolkit	1
Governor involvement	1

DfES/LEA	1
Unable to comment	1

Question 3:

Is your school taking part in the Healthy Schools Programme?

	No of Schools	%
Schools participating in Healthy Schools Programme	15	79%
Schools not yet participating in Healthy Schools Programme	4	21%

Question 4:

Does the school have a breakfast club? If so, what proportion of children attend?

	No of Schools	%
School has a Breakfast Club	7	37%
School does not have a Breakfast Club	12	63%

The popularity of the breakfast clubs varied enormously. Figures quoted were 6%, 7.5%, 8%, 9% and 25% of pupils attending.

Question 5:

Does the school have a tuck shop or vending machine? If so, does the school have a policy relating to healthy eating and items sold in the shop/machine?

	No of Schools
Tuck Shop	
- All Healthy Options	2
- Some Healthy options	7
Vending Machine	1
No Tuck shop, vending machine or school snacks	6
Snacks via school kitchen	4

Question 6:

Does your school have a kitchen? If so, is it used?

	No of Schools	%
School Kitchen Used	14	74
School Kitchen Unused	2	11
No School Kitchen	3	16

Question 7:

Do you offer a hot meal service at school? If so who produces the meal eg external caterers, own staff or other? Does the menu offer only healthy options and are the ingredients locally sourced where possible? How many children take a hot meal?

Do you offer a hot meal service?	No of Schools	%
Yes	16	88%
No	3	12%
If so who produces the meal?		
External Caterers – Meal produced in School	13	71%
External Caterers – Meals Transported	2	12%
Meals cooked in house	1	6%
Do you offer some healthy options?		
Yes	12	65%
No		
Is produce sourced locally?		

Yes	4	24%
No		

Question 8:

Do you offer a packed lunch service or do children bring their own? If children bring their own lunch do you encourage them to include healthy options and avoid sweets, crisps, chocolate and processed food?

Do you offer a packed lunch service (other than for free school meals)?	No of Schools	%
Yes	11	58
No	8	42
Do you encourage children not to bring crisps, sweets, chocolate & fizzy drinks in their packed lunches?		
Yes*	13	68
No	1	5
Didn't Say	5	26

*one school asked children not to bring fizzy drinks

Question 9:

How many children are entitled to free school meals? How many children actually take free school meals?

% of children who are entitled to free school meals and take them	No of Schools
100%	2
85%	1
83%	1
81%	1
80%	2
64%	1
60%	1
50%	1
44%	1
Information not submitted	8
Likely to be more pupils entitled but not claiming	3

Question 10:

Do teachers feel that pupils' behaviour changes after lunch? If the school has made any changes to lunch provision, have these changes affected pupils' behaviour?

Do teachers feel that pupils behaviour changes after lunch?	No of Schools	%
Yes	11	58
No	5	26
Don't know	1	5
Didn't say	2	11
If the school has changed to a healthier option menu, has pupil behaviour improved?		
Yes	4	21
No	3	16
Didn't say	12	63

This question was quite subjective and the way in which it was answered varied enormously. Most of the answers were based on a gut reaction/feeling.

Question 11:

The DfES recommends that drinking water should be available all day to all pupils free of charge. Does the school have a policy on provision of drinking water for pupils throughout the day? If so, what impact does this have on pupil behaviour?

Do you have a water policy	No of Schools	%
Yes	19	100
Pupils can drink in class	8	42
Pupils can't drink in class	3	16
Didn't say	8	42
If so, do you think it has a positive impact on pupil behaviour		
Yes	1	5
No	1	5
Don't know	3	16
Didn't answer the question	14	74

One other comment on drinking water was that it leads to more frequent trips to the toilet.

Question 12: (Primary Schools only)

All 4-6 year olds in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Does the school participate in the free fruit scheme? If not, what are the reasons for not participating?

Not applicable.

Question 13:

Does the school's governing body monitor school meal provision?

	No of Schools	%
Yes	17	89%
No	2	11%

Question 14:

What more could the County Council do to help you in promoting healthy eating in the school?

Kitchen/dining facilities
Provide a kitchen with adequate facilities and staff
Provide a kitchen so that we can provide hot meals
Provide advice on grants to improve kitchen and dining facilities
Build a new kitchen (staffed by Jamie Oliver)
Increased funding to build a dedicated dining area
Parents
Send letters and information to parents
Campaign to encourage parents to ensure healthy eating
Advice on how best to reach parents
Wider approach to promotion/publicity/marketing – into supermarkets etc
Breakfast clubs
Funding for breakfast club, after school cookery club
Provide information on breakfast clubs
Provide free breakfast to those pupils entitled to free school meals
Funding
Provide more financial resources
Financial support to help schools
Ensure there is no further financial burden on parents
Provide free water cooling system
Negotiate bulk buying with locals suppliers/supermarkets to bring down costs

Funding for marketing and publicity
Extend the fruit scheme to older pupils
School has to 'top up' funding for FSM. FSM allowance does not cover the cost of meals
Funding (however small) for promotional work
Curriculum issues/promotion of healthy eating
Continue to find ways of using the curriculum to promote healthy eating
Apply pressure on government to amend National Curriculum to allow time to teach food/nutrition/healthy eating
LEA Officer going to schools to talk to them/visiting workshops
Provide schools with contact lists
Use a celebrity to promote ideas/ Arrange for professional chefs to visit schools
Provide case studies of best practice
Provide learning resource packs for PHSE/county wide healthy eating campaign
Promote healthy eating recipes for food technology lessons
Drama groups coming into schools to act out healthy eating scenario
Outside speakers – a chef coming into schools to give cookery demonstrations
Help with promotion and cost of materials
After school cookery club – help with cost of materials
Courses for staff
Provide up to date specific dietary advice and guidelines
Provide courses in food and nutrition (including food safety and hygiene) for staff and parents
Other
Recognise link between good food and school attainment
Reconsider using profit-making companies for school meals (too great a conflict)
Consider the time that schools allow for their pupils to eat lunch. Children want to rush lunch so that they can go out to play.
Hall not big enough for all pupils to eat together. Two sittings – lunch is rushed and children don't want to wait.

High schools - Total Number of Schools: 16

Question 1:

How does your school promote the healthy eating message? Which lessons are used? How successful is this?

Promoting the Healthy eating message	No of Schools
PHSE	12
Food Technology	12
Planning Healthy Menu's in conjunction with Caterers	7
Healthy Schools Programme	5
PE	4
Healthy Eating Displays/Publicity	4
Cross Curriculum/Whole School Approach	3
Science	2
School Council	2
Health Week	1
Open Evenings	1
Questionnaires	1
Feedback to Chef from staff and students	1
Parents Evenings	1
Vocational Catering Training Courses	1
Eco Schools	1
Bus Newsletter	1
Assembly	1
Biology	1
School Nurse	1
Displays	1

Most schools said that they had had some or reasonable success

Question 2:

What guidance has your school received on healthy eating?

Guidance Received by Schools	No of Schools
Healthy Schools Programme	10
Catering Company	5
PHSE	3
LEA	3
DfES	4
Food in Schools Toolkit	2
Local Authority Training Course	1
Curriculum Guidelines	1

Specialist School Advice	1
Media Awareness	1
Guidance from QCA and Youth Sports Trust	1
Hospital Dietician	1
School Bursar	1
Very Little	1
Not sure	1

Question 3:

Is your school taking part in the Healthy Schools Programme?

	No of Schools	%
Schools participating in Healthy Schools Programme	15	94
Didn't Answer Question	1	7

Question 4:

Does the school have a breakfast club? If so, what proportion of children attend?

	No of Schools	%
School has a Breakfast Club	12	75
School does not have a Breakfast Club	3	19
Didn't Answer Question	1	6

The popularity of the breakfast clubs varied enormously. Figures quoted were between 5% and 3% attending. Some schools ran clubs intermittently for various reasons.

Question 5:

Does the school have a tuck shop or vending machine? If so, does the school have a policy relating to healthy eating and items sold in the shop/machine?

	No of Schools
Tuck Shop	

Vending Machine		
- All Healthy	4	
- Some Healthy Options	8	
No Tuck shop	6	
No tuck shop or vending machine	3	
Snacks sold in Canteen	2	
Didn't Answer Question	1	

Question 6:

Does your school have a kitchen? If so, is it used?

	No of Schools	%
Yes, school kitchen used to cook hot meals	15	94
No school kitchen but meals transported into school	1	6

Some schools also use their kitchens to prepare snacks for break times as well

Question 7:

Do you offer a hot meal service at school? If so who produces the meal eg external caterers, own staff or other? Does the menu offer only healthy options and are the ingredients locally sourced where possible? How many children take a hot meal?

Do you offer a hot meal service?	No of Schools	%
Yes	16	100
If so who produces the meal?		
External Caterers – Meal produced on site	14	88
External Caterers – Meals Transported	1	6
Meals cooked in house	1	6
Do you offer some healthy options?		
Yes	14	88
No	1	6
Didn't Say	1	6

Is produce sourced locally?		
Yes	5	31
No	1	6
Didn't say	10	63

Question 8:

Do you offer a packed lunch service or do children bring their own? If children bring their own lunch do you encourage them to include healthy options and avoid sweets, crisps, chocolate and processed food?

Do you offer a packed lunch service (other than for free school meals)?	No of Schools	%
Yes	10	63
No	6	37
Do you encourage children not to bring crisps, sweets, chocolate & fizzy drinks in their packed lunches?		
Yes	12	75
No	3	19
Didn't Say	1	6

Question 9:

How many children are entitled to free school meals? How many children actually take free school meals?

The main messages from answers to this question were:

- Approximately 62% for 1 school;
- One school stated that pupils could take their free school meal allowance at any time ie before school, break time or lunch time;
- Difficult for schools to be certain of the numbers of pupils entitled to FSM;
- Most schools felt that more pupils were entitled that actually took FSM;

Question 10:

Do teachers feel that pupils' behaviour changes after lunch? If the school has made any changes to lunch provision, have these changes affected pupils' behaviour?

Do teachers feel that pupils behaviour changes after lunch?	No of Schools	%
Yes, behaviour worsens	7	47
Yes, behaviour worsens for some/particular children		
Yes, behaviour improves		
No change	2	13
Not noticed		
Don't know		
Not answered	6	40
If the school has changed to a healthier option menu, has pupil behaviour improved?		
Yes	3	20
No	2	13
9	9	60
Didn't Answer Question	1	7

Question was answered in a wide variety of ways (mainly due to imprecise nature of the question). Comments included:

- Shorter lunchtimes have supported purposeful afternoons
- Behaviour has improved since fizzy drinks have not been allowed in school

Question 11:

The DfES recommends that drinking water should be available all day to all pupils free of charge. Does the school have a policy on provision of drinking water for pupils throughout the day? If so, what impact does this have on pupil behaviour?

Do you have a water policy	No of Schools	%
Yes	12	75
No	2	13
Didn't Answer Question	2	13
Can pupils drink in class		
Yes	6*	38
No	2	13
Didn't say	6	38
Didn't Answer Question	2	13
If pupils do drink water throughout the day, do	No of Schools	%

positive impact on pupil behaviour		
Don't know	2	13
Didn't say	10	63
Didn't Answer Question	4	25

Comments included

* One school is carrying out a trial which allows children to drink water in maths and PE lessons

Question 12: (Primary Schools only)

All 4-6 year olds in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Does the school participate in the free fruit scheme? If not, what are the reasons for not participating?

Not applicable to High Schools

Question 13:

Does the school's governing body monitor school meal provision?

	No of Schools	%
Yes	13	81
No	3	19

Some schools reported that the Governing Body didn't formally monitor school meal provision, but that governors were aware of the provision and supported healthy eating.

Question 14:

What more could the County Council do to help you in promoting healthy eating in the school?

Kitchen/Dining Facilities
Assist with funding for better dining facilities
Invest in kitchen facilities
Parents
Education/awareness for parents from County
Parent workshops
Funding
Increase Free School Meal Allowance
Clarity over funding
More help with funding for Healthy Eating Projects
Provide funding for water filtration systems

Curriculum Issues/Promotion of Healthy Eating
Promotional Events
Healthy Eating Roadshows with Taster Sessions
Celebrity Promoters
Incentives for pupils who choose healthy options
Encourage community sponsorship for special events
Newspaper Adverts
Posters
Help with publicity
Healthy Eating Workshops
Other
Liaise with Caterers to ensure compliance with Healthy Schools
Help Pack showing cost option and sample business plan
Information on forthcoming initiatives
Set national guidelines to be adhered to by all caterers
Encourage schools to cater in house

Special Schools and PRUs - Total Number of Schools: 9

Question 1:

How does your school promote the healthy eating message? Which lessons are used? How successful is this?

Promoting the Healthy eating message	No of Schools
PHSE	7
Food Technology	4
Healthy Schools Programme	2
Science	2
Lessons	1
Cookery Lesson	1
School Meals	1
Assembly	1
Road Shows	1
Food/GCSE Course	1
Do not sell coke/fizzy drinks	1
Restrict the consumption of crisps and chocolate pars sold to pupils	1
Offer healthier snack alternatives	1
Encourage reduced sugar intake	1
Whole school projects involving parents	1
Fruit at snack time	1
Wholemeal toast at snack time	1
Posters	1
Healthy School Initiatives	1
Nurture time (tea and toast, fruit, fruit juice, milk)	1
Staff leading by example	1
Cookery Club	1

Most schools said that they had had some or reasonable success

Question 2:

What guidance has your school received on healthy eating?

Guidance Received by Schools	No of Schools
Food in Schools Toolkit	2
None	2
Publicity and Awareness	2
School Nurse	1
Teachers Research Material	1
DfEE	1
National Curriculum	1
'Every Child Matters' agenda	1
Healthy Schools Programme	1
Inset Training	1
Local Network Meeting	1
LEA	1
Environmental Health	1

Question 3:

Is your school taking part in the Healthy Schools Programme?

	No of Schools	%
Schools participating in Healthy Schools Programme	5	56
Schools not participating in Healthy Schools Programme	4	44

Question 4:

Does the school have a breakfast club? If so, what proportion of children attend?

None of the schools that responded had a breakfast club, although some mentioned that they did have the facility to offer toast to children who were hungry or hadn't had breakfast

Question 5:

Does the school have a tuck shop or vending machine? If so, does the school have a policy relating to healthy eating and items sold in the shop/machine?

	No of Schools
Tuck Shop - Some Healthy options	2
No tuck shop or vending machine	7

Question 6:

Does your school have a kitchen? If so, is it used?

	No of Schools	%
Yes, school kitchen used to cook hot meals	4	44
No school kitchen	5	56

Some schools do not have catering kitchens but small domestic kitchens which they use for preparing snacks or reheating pre cooked food.

Question 7:

Do you offer a hot meal service at school? If so who produces the meal eg external caterers, own staff or other? Does the menu offer only healthy options and are the ingredients locally sourced where possible? How many children take a hot meal?

Do you offer a hot meal service?	No of Schools	%
Yes	4	44
If so who produces the meal?		
External Caterers – Meal produced on site	2	50
Meals cooked in house	2	50
Do you offer some healthy options?		
Yes	2	50
No	1	25
Didn't Say	1	25
Is produce sourced locally?		
Yes	1	25
Didn't Say	3	33

Question 8:

Do you offer a packed lunch service or do children bring their own? If children bring their own lunch do you encourage them to include healthy options and avoid sweets, crisps, chocolate and processed food?

Do you offer a packed lunch service (other than for free school meals)?	No of Schools	%
Yes	9	60
No	6	40
Do you encourage children not to bring crisps, sweets, chocolate & fizzy drinks in their packed lunches?		
Yes	11	73
No	3	20
Didn't Say	1	7

Question 9:

How many children are entitled to free school meals? How many children actually take free school meals?

The main messages from answers to this question were with the exception of 2 schools 70%+ of children take free school meals with 6 schools having a 90%+ take up of meals.

Question 10:

Do teachers feel that pupils' behaviour changes after lunch? If the school has made any changes to lunch provision, have these changes affected pupils' behaviour?

Do teachers feel that pupils behaviour changes after lunch?	No of Schools	%
Yes, behaviour worsens	3	33
No change	4	44
Don't know	1	11
Not answered	1	11
If the school has changed to a healthier		

option menu, has pupil behaviour improved?		
Yes	2	22
No	1	11
Didn't Answer Question	5	56

Question was answered in a wide variety of ways (mainly due to imprecise nature of the question). Comments included:

Question 11:

The DfES recommends that drinking water should be available all day to all pupils free of charge. Does the school have a policy on provision of drinking water for pupils throughout the day? If so, what impact does this have on pupil behaviour?

Do you have a water policy	No of Schools	%
Yes	9	100
Can pupils drink in class		
Yes	7	78
Didn't say	2	22
If pupils do drink water throughout the day, do you think it has a positive impact on pupil behaviour	No of Schools	%
Yes	3	33
Didn't say	6	67

Question 12: (Primary Schools only)

All 4-6 year olds in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Does the school participate in the free fruit scheme? If not, what are the reasons for not participating?

The schools that were eligible did participate

Question 13:

Does the school's governing body monitor school meal provision?

	No of Schools	%
Yes	4	44
No	5	56

Some schools reported that the Governing Body didn't formally monitor school meal provision, but that governors were aware of the provision and supported healthy eating.

Question 14:

What more could the County Council do to help you in promoting healthy eating in the school?

Kitchen/Dining Facilities
Assist with funding for better dining facilities
Invest in kitchen facilities
Parents
Education/awareness for parents from County
Parent workshops
Funding
Increase Free School Meal Allowance
Clarity over funding
More help with funding for Healthy Eating Projects
Provide funding for water filtration systems
Curriculum Issues/Promotion of Healthy Eating
Promotional Events
Healthy Eating Roadshows with Taster Sessions
Celebrity Promoters
Incentives for pupils who choose healthy options
Encourage community sponsorship for special events
Newspaper Adverts
Posters
Help with publicity
Healthy Eating Workshops
Other
Liaise with Caterers to ensure compliance with Healthy Schools
Help Pack showing cost option and sample business plan
Information on forthcoming initiatives
Set national guidelines to be adhered to by all caterers
Encourage schools to cater in house

Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools Scrutiny Task Group

Monday 12 December 2005

Suggested Questions for High School Pupils

1. Have you had any lessons at school about healthy eating? These could take the form of PSHE lessons, tasting sessions, sponsored events or within science or food technology.
2. Does your school council have any input into the content of school meals?
3. What do you think is meant by healthy foods? Do you know which foods are supposed to be good for you and which are not? Can you describe what would go into a healthy dinner?
4. Do you think your school provides healthy food for you at break and lunch times?
5. Do you notice any effect on your behaviour or concentration when you eat or drink certain foods? What about the effect of certain food or drink on your friends?
6. Are you allowed to drink water at any time during the day? Do you notice any effect other than being thirsty if you go for a long time without drinking water?
7. Do you feel any pressure from your friends to conform to eating certain foods?
8. How would you encourage your friends to eat healthily?
9. What could the County Council do to encourage young people to eat more healthily?

**Healthy Eating in Worcestershire Schools
Scrutiny Task Group Meeting 18 October 2005
Possible questions for caterers and in-house staff**

- Who designs the menus – the caterer or the school?
- If the caterer chooses the menus, what input does the school have, if any?
- Has the recent publicity surrounding school meals had any impact on the food provided?
- What is the pupils' response to healthier options?
- What impact do you think the increased expenditure recently announced by the Government will have on the quality of school meals? (Minimum spend on ingredients to be 50p in primary schools and 60p in secondary schools)
- The Government is currently consulting on proposed new minimum standards in schools to ensure children get essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals. What do you think of these proposals? Do you foresee any problems in meeting the minimum standards?
- How do you minimise the use of processed foods?
- Do you get advice from qualified nutritionists?
- Do you use additive free food?
- Do you use fresh produce? Do you use locally sourced ingredients?
- Bearing in mind the money available, what, in your opinion, would improve the quality of school meals in Worcestershire?
- Some schools are finding that when they change their menus to healthy options the number of children taking meals is declining. Is it likely that commercial liability will be an issue for you?
- How much wastage of food is there?
- Do you offer incentives to the children to encourage them to eat healthily?
- What staff training do you provide? How well trained are your staff?
- Have you invested in the school kitchen facilities?
- How could Worcestershire County Council help more?

Schedule of Activity

Date	Activity
8 September 2005	The Scrutiny Task Group met to discuss terms of reference, agree the way forward and hear from George Keighley, LA Catering Officer (retired September 2005).
19 September 2005	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group with Dave Traxson, Educational Psychologist, Cath Phillipson, Healthy Schools Programme Co-ordinator. The Group also watched Trevor McDonald's Tonight Programme (April 2005), "Bad Boys",
11 October 2005	Jo Hodges and Sean Shannon met with Angela Williams and Mos Bradley, Great Grub.
18 October 2005	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group with school catering companies, in house catering staff and packed lunch providers.
2 November 2005	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group with Professor David Benton, Department of Psychology, University of Swansea, Wales.
18 November 2005	Meeting with Nicola Phipps, Nutritionist
1 December 2005	Meeting with Liz Eyre, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children's and Young People and Colin Weeden, Head of Policy Development
7 December 2005	Jo Hodges and Sean Shannon talked to primary age children.
12 December 2005	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group with students from Blessed Edward Oldcorne College and Nunnery Wood High School.
3 February 2006	Jo Hodges, Suzanne O'Leary and Alyson Grice met with Julia McClure, Catering Officer (appointed January 2006
24 February 2006	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group to discuss questionnaire analysis and recommendations.
20 March 2006	Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group to discuss draft report.

National Healthy Schools Programme
Core theme 2: Healthy Eating – Criteria in full

Pupils have the confidence, skills and understanding to make healthy food choices. Healthy and nutritious food and drink is available across the school day.

A Healthy School:

1. Has identified a member of the senior management team to oversee all aspects of food in the school;
2. Ensures provision of training in practical food education for staff, including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene;
3. Has a whole-school food policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact;
4. Involves pupils and parents in guiding food policy and practice within the school, enables them to contribute to healthy eating and acts on their feedback;
5. Has a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social interaction of pupils;
6. Ensures healthier food and drink options are available and promoted including breakfast clubs, at break (if established or planned) and at lunchtime as outlined by Food in Schools guidance;
7. Has meals, vending machines and tuck shop facilities that are nutritious and healthy (see Food in Schools guidance), and meet or exceed national standards, and is working towards the latest DfES guidance on improving school meals services;
8. Monitors pupils' menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision;
9. Ensures that pupils have opportunities to learn about different types of food in the context of a balanced diet (using the Balance of Good Health) and how to plan, budget, prepare and cook meals, understanding the need to avoid the consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and fat and increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables;
10. Has easy access to free, clean and palatable drinking water, using the Food in Schools Guidance; and
11. Consults pupils about food choices throughout the school day using school councils, Healthy School task groups or other representative pupils bodies.