



**UK Government**

# **School food standards: updating the legislative framework**

**Government consultation**

**Launch date 13 April 2026**

**Respond by 12 June 2026**

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
Who this consultation is for	9
Issue date	9
Enquiries	9
Additional copies	10
The response	10
<b>Overview</b>	<b>11</b>
Respond online	14
Other ways to respond	14
Deadline	14
<b>Background</b>	<b>15</b>
The current School Food Standards	15
Schools covered by the School Food Standards	17
Technical details of our consultation	17
Proposed updates	19
Breakfast standards	19
Whole school day standards (excluding breakfast/before school day)	24
Increasing fibre in the School Food Standards	24
Reducing sugar in the School Food Standards	28
Reducing foods higher in fat, sugar and salt	34
Protein	39

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Maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools	43
Practical considerations	44
Timeline	45
<b>Annex A: Consultation questions for online survey portal</b>	<b>47</b>
Section A: About you	47
Confidentiality	47
Privacy notice	47
Statement on use of AI in consultation analysis	48
Section B: questions on the proposed updates to the School Food Standards	54
Breakfast and whole school day standards	54
Increasing fibre	57
Reducing sugar	60
Reducing foods higher in fat, sugar and salt	64
Protein changes	69
Schedule 5 - nurseries	70
Overall question	71
Section C: practical considerations	72
Implementing new standards	72
Compliance	72
Culture, equality and diversity	74
Environmental principles	75
Closing question	75

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## Introduction

School food matters. A good meal or a nutritious breakfast can set a child up for the day - helping them to concentrate, learn, and thrive. That is why, as part of the government's 10 Year Health Plan for England<sup>1</sup>, we committed to updating the School Food Standards in England, to ensure that every child gets the good quality food they need that gives them the best start in life. We want healthy, tasty school meals to be an enjoyable and familiar part of children's time at school.

Too many children are not getting the nutritious food they need. The latest National Diet and Nutrition Survey<sup>2</sup> shows children consume twice the recommended amount of free sugars, with only 8% of primary and 5% of secondary pupils meeting guidelines. Dental decay is the leading cause of hospital admissions for 5-9-year-olds. More than 90% of children are consuming insufficient fibre, which is critical for digestive and heart health in later life. Over 10.5% of children aged 4-5 start school with obesity. By the end of primary school this rises to 22.2%, and to almost 30% in the most deprived areas. This is simply not good enough.

We know that school food provides a crucial source of daily nutrition and schools have a fundamental role in ensuring pupils are well nourished and supported to build healthy eating habits

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<sup>1</sup> [10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>2</sup> [2024/25 National Child Measurement Programme annual report](#)

that will shape their futures. Parents want school meals to be healthier, too. According to polling by Chefs in Schools in 2025<sup>3</sup>, 96% of parents said that their children's meals should be made with fresh or nutritious ingredients and among those, 83% want the government to introduce stronger, enforceable standards across all schools.

That is why this government has made school food a priority. We are rolling out free breakfast clubs in every state-funded school with primary aged pupils in England, and from September 2026 we are extending free school meals to all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit - providing over half a million more children from disadvantaged backgrounds access to a free, nutritious meal every school day, lifting 100,000 children out of poverty. These are the biggest expansions in school food provision in a generation, ensuring we drive improvements in attainment, behaviour and outcomes, helping children get the best possible education and chance to succeed in life.

What children and young people eat at school is determined by The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 (otherwise known as the School Food Standards). While we know many schools are already delivering high quality, nutritious meals and take their food provision seriously, these regulations are out of date.

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<sup>3</sup> [The Future of School Food | Chefs in Schools](#)

We are updating the regulations to align with the latest nutritional guidance<sup>4</sup>. These standards will cover the whole school day, including a specific set of standards for breakfast. These are changes that respond directly to what parents, health experts, and the food sector have been telling us for years. It means increasing fibre by ensuring schools offer more wholegrains, vegetables, pulses and fruit across meals and snacks. It means reducing sugar by limiting sweetened breakfast items, desserts and drinks, and by lowering the added sugar content of everyday menu options. It means restricting foods that are higher in fat, sugar and salt, such as deep-fried items, processed meats, confectionery and savoury snacks, and ensuring these appear less often or in controlled portions. For secondary schools, we propose phasing in some of these changes to give schools and caterers more time to adapt.

We want school food to work for every child. It must be flexible enough to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities, those with allergies and intolerances, and those from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Inclusive menus are central to what we are proposing, and we want to hear from families, schools, and specialists as part of this consultation to make sure we get this right.

We are also proposing to remove the reduced set of lunch standards (schedule 5) that currently applies to maintained

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sacn-carbohydrates-and-health-report>

nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools. This will mean that these early years settings will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance when considering their meals service.

Schools must comply with the School Food Standards to make sure that children get the healthy meals they deserve. These updated standards are not about making that job harder - they are about giving the whole school food community a clear, modern framework to work to, with the support needed to make it happen. We are proposing separate standards for breakfast (before school) and the school day (including lunch service). This reflects these services often being carried out by separate caterers and allows flexibility where secondary schools can continue to provide healthy grab and go items at their mid-morning break service. We want to understand what will help schools meet these standards and what further support the government can offer.

Governing bodies play a central role in shaping the quality and nutritional value of school meals, and the Department for Education recommends they work with senior leaders to develop a whole school food policy covering food provision, food education, the role of the catering team and plans to increase lunch take-up. We are proposing schools appoint a lead governor for school food and publish their food policies and menus online, which would strengthen accountability and improve compliance.

Throughout this entire process, we will continue working closely with schools to identify the guidance they need to meet higher standards. We will also work alongside Department for

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Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as it develops a new food strategy<sup>5</sup> to ensure the food on children's plates is good quality, accessible and affordable.

To deliver meaningful and lasting change, these reforms must work for everyone involved in school food: children and young people, parents and carers, schools and governors, and the chefs, cooks and caterers who work tirelessly to nourish growing children and who bring these standards to life every day. That is why we are launching this consultation to seek as wide a range of views as possible. We are committed to engaging openly with all of these groups to ensure the mandatory standards are practical, inclusive and supportive of a whole school approach to healthy eating. By working together, we can create a food system in schools that supports children's wellbeing, reflects local needs, and empowers every child to thrive. We want to build these improvements collaboratively so that they are workable, sustainable and make a real difference to children's lives.

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<sup>5</sup> [A UK government food strategy for England - GOV.UK](#)

## Who this consultation is for

- Parents
- School staff, school and trust leaders and governing bodies
- Local authorities
- School food providers, catering managers and chefs/cooks
- Food manufacturers and suppliers
- Public health professionals
- Nutritionists and dietitians working with schools
- Holiday, Activities and Food (HAF programme) providers
- Private, Voluntary and Independent Providers (PVIs) delivering wraparound or holiday childcare services

## Issue date

The consultation was issued on 13 April 2026.

## Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team on:

[SchoolFoodStandards.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk](mailto:SchoolFoodStandards.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk).

If your enquiry is related to the Department for Education (DfE) e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: [Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk](mailto:Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

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## **Additional copies**

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

## **The response**

The results of the consultation and the department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in September 2026, to avoid the summer holiday period.

## Overview

This consultation makes proposals for updating the School Food Standards on which we are seeking views. These are explained in full in the “proposed updates” section of this document. We have provided an example secondary school menu alongside this consultation document. In summary the changes we propose to make are related to:

### Increasing fibre

- Ensuring one or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment to all main meal options every day including grab and go.
- Ensuring all desserts are accompanied by or contain a portion of fruit.
- Including a fruit-only day for dessert at least once per week in primary schools.
- Increasing the fibre content of starchy foods by moving to higher fibre breads and at least 50% wholewheat / brown versions of rice and pasta.
- requiring at least one portion of pulses (not including baked beans) within or alongside all menu options on one day a week.

## **Reducing sugar**

- Restricting the frequency of sweetened baked products and desserts (changing in stages for secondary schools).
- Removing fruit juice and combination drinks from school meals services.
- Allowing only plain water, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, lactose free milk and some plant-based drinks in primary and secondary schools (changing in stages for secondary schools). Plus, sugar free flavoured still water, fruit-flavoured no added sugar still drinks, tea and coffee with no syrups or extras allowed in secondary schools.
- Restricting sugar, honey and syrups from being added to food or drinks during or after preparation.

## **Restricting foods higher in fat, sugar and salt**

- No longer permitting deep fried foods.
- Setting limits to how often certain foods can be served, such as processed meat and batter coated items and restricting the levels of sugar and salt in condiments and spreads to further restrict options higher in fat, sugar and salt.
- Restricting the use of cheese as a main ingredient every day (changing in stages for secondary schools).
- Setting sugar limits for yoghurts and plant-based yoghurts.
- Restricting snacks to fruit, vegetables, savoury crackers and breadsticks only.

## Further changes

- Introducing a new set of standards for breakfast service, before the start of the school day, separate to the rest of the day standards.
- Expanding the options available to schools to meet their requirements to serve certain proteins on three or more days each week, by including pulses alongside meat or poultry as a source of protein.
- Restricting the frequency of vegetarian or plant-based products which are marketed as meat alternatives.
- Introducing requirements for what is permitted within a meal deal.
- Restricting the use of non-sugar sweeteners.
- Phasing requirements in for secondary schools on cheese as a main protein option; the number of times pulses are added to a main meal option; restrictions on sweetened baked goods and desserts; and the list of permitted healthier drinks.
- Removing the reduced set of lunch standards for school lunches provided at maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools.

**Ensuring free access to drinking water:** We are reaffirming the requirement that all schools must provide pupils with access to free, fresh drinking water at all times. This remains a core part of the School Food Standards and is essential in supporting healthier drink choices.

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## Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible.

Visit [DfE consultations on GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/consultations) to submit your response.

## Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may request an alternative format of the form.

## By email

[SchoolFoodStandards.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk](mailto:SchoolFoodStandards.CONULTATION@education.gov.uk)

## By post

School Food Policy Team  
Floor 3  
Department for Education  
2 St Paul's Place  
125 Norfolk Street  
Sheffield, S1 2FJ

## Deadline

The consultation closes on 12 June 2026.

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# Background

## The current School Food Standards

The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 are available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2014/1603/contents>.

These standards set a clear minimum standard for school food in England, that schools must adhere to. They are designed to ensure that children get the energy and nutrients they need throughout the school day, while developing healthy eating habits.

The standards apply across the school day including breakfast, mid-morning break, lunchtime and food served in after school provision up to 6pm every school day.

The standards determine the types of foods and drinks a school must offer and how often, including what types of food and drink are restricted or cannot be served. Constraints have been in place for many years for foods high in fat, salt and sugar, including high sugar foods such as confectionery and sugary drinks. As currently, these standards will not apply to food provided at parties or celebrations including fund-raising events, or for use in teaching food preparation and cookery. These decisions will remain with schools.

The School Food Standards were last updated on 1 January 2015 moving from the previous nutrient-based standards to the current food-based standards. Food is separated into food groups in the

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current standards (schedule 1). In doing so, we reduced the cost burden of nutritional analysis by schools and made the standards more easily understandable for catering and school staff. These standards also allow school chefs and cooks more creative freedom to adapt to the preferences of the children at their school, source seasonal or local food, and take advantage of price fluctuations. Parents are also more easily able to know if the food served to their children meets the standards.

The School Food Standards regulates the food and drink provided across the school day. Beyond this, we believe that head teachers, school governors and caterers are best placed to make decisions about their school food policies, taking into account local circumstances and the needs of their pupils. We expect schools to make reasonable efforts to accommodate for pupils with particular requirements, for example to reflect dietary, medical, SEND and sensory needs, working with parents, caterers and health professionals.

Compliance with the School Food Standards is mandatory for maintained schools, academies and free schools. This includes maintained nurseries and nursery units within primary schools, pupil referral units and sixth forms that are part of secondary schools. School governors are responsible for ensuring that their school is compliant and should appropriately challenge the headteacher and the senior leadership team to ensure the school is meeting its obligations.

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## Schools covered by the School Food Standards

- Maintained primary
- Maintained secondary
- Maintained special
- Maintained nursery
- Maintained boarding
- Pupil Referral Units
- Academies and free schools
- Sixth forms that are part of a secondary school
- Non-Maintained special schools – via paragraph 26 of the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015/728 ([Guidance for Non-maintained Special Schools](#))

## Technical details of our consultation

The proposed update to the School Food Standards aims to build on the positive impact of the current standards, while bringing them into line with the most recent government nutritional recommendations, based on scientific dietary advice.

These proposals have been developed through close consultation with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and were also informed by an advisory group and key stakeholders in the food, catering, nutrition, and health sectors, who hold a breadth of knowledge and expertise in relation to school food.

We tested our initial proposals in a group of schools during the Autumn 2025 term to understand how practical the updated standards would be. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities asked the research agency Verian to work with schools and caterers to plan, buy and serve menus based on the

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proposed new School Food Standards. Verian used several methods to test how the proposals worked in real settings, including how easy they were to use, their cost, how acceptable they were, and how well schools could procure the required foods. This involved interviews with caterers and senior school leaders, as well as surveys with pupils and parents. Based on what we learned from this testing, we have made changes to our proposals. In particular, we now propose phasing in some changes for secondary schools (as detailed in the whole school day standards).

The testing showed that some secondary schools faced more challenges than primary schools because of their reliance on a 'grab and go' food culture, which is often shaped by limited space and tight timetables.

To help address these barriers, we are proposing to phase some changes for secondary schools, giving them an extra year to meet certain standards. This extra time will allow caterers, cooks and chefs to try out different ways to improve the nutritional quality of grab-and-go options, and to explore how to make buying and eating school meals more convenient, while still offering pupils familiar dishes they enjoy.

The most important finding from the testing was that all schools and caterers need enough lead-in time to create and introduce new recipes. Caterers suggested that a minimum of 12 months is required. With the planned implementation approach, we are giving schools more than two terms' notice, which will help them prepare effectively.

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## Proposed updates

### Breakfast standards

The government has successfully started rolling out free breakfast clubs, confirmed funding for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for the next three years, and boosted the number of places through the wraparound childcare programme, which means that more pupils are benefiting from good quality, nutritious food before and after the formal school day and in holiday time.

This growth will continue with the government's commitment to rolling out free breakfast clubs to all state funded primary schools in England. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill will require every state funded school with children on roll from reception to year 6 to offer a 30-minute free breakfast club before school. This programme has delivered over 8.5 million meals so far.

Breakfast provision must already comply with the existing School Food Standards. We are proposing to include a separate set of standards that will apply specifically to breakfast service and food served before the school day starts, to provide clearer, more detailed requirements to schools on this provision. We have detailed these proposals below.

The standards that will apply to the whole of the school day (up until 6pm) are detailed after this section.

#### **Summary of proposed new standards/permitted foods and drinks**

Breakfast cereals with less than 5g/100g total sugar, no added sugar muesli and plain unflavoured porridge.

## **Summary of proposed new standards/permitted foods and drinks**

Bread and morning/bakery goods: all bread to be a source of fibre (defined as containing at least 3g/100g of fibre) such as wholemeal breads, some seeded breads and higher fibre white breads such as those which are made with 50% whole grain flour and 50% white flour that does not contain added fat or oil; fruited bread based buns; crumpets.

Fried breads, pastries and croissants are not permitted.

Foods and dishes made from other starchy carbohydrates are permitted but must be sugar-free and without non-sugar sweeteners.

Fried potato products are not permitted.

A portion of fruit or vegetables must be available at breakfast. This can be fresh, dried, canned in juice (not in syrup), defrosted from frozen, or cooked.

Fruit does not include fruit juice, smoothies and fruit purees.

Vegetables do not include potatoes, canned pasta in tomato sauce or baked beans.

## Summary of proposed new standards/permitted foods and drinks

Plain unsweetened and unflavoured semi skimmed or skimmed milk, lactose free milk. Plain soya, oat drinks, must be unsweetened or no sugar and fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.

Dairy yoghurt to be less than 10g/100g total sugar and not contain non-sugar sweeteners. Plant based versions to be less than 7g/100g total sugar, not contain non-sugar sweeteners and fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.

Eggs (not fried), baked beans and pulses.

No processed meats.

Fruit spreads must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful and must be reduced sugar and salt and contain no sweeteners. Savoury spreads must be limited to sachets or portion sizes of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful and must be reduced sugar and salt and contain no sweeteners.

Chocolate spreads, honey and syrups are not permitted.

Honey contains a high percentage of free sugars.

## Summary of proposed new standards/permitted foods and drinks

Foods and drinks containing non-sugar sweeteners must not be served in primary school. Foods containing non-sugar sweeteners must not be served in secondary school. Non-sugar sweeteners are not available to be added to food and drink afterwards.

Non-sugar sweeteners are synthetic and naturally occurring or modified non-nutritive sweeteners that are not classified as sugars.

In primary schools, the only permitted drinks that apply are:

- Free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times, including where food is served.
- Plain water (still or carbonated).
- Plain unsweetened and unflavoured semi skimmed or skimmed milk or lactose free milk.
- Plain soya and oat drinks. Must be unsweetened or no sugar and fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.

## Summary of proposed new standards/permitted foods and drinks

In secondary schools, we are proposing to phase in the changes to drinks. From September 2028, the only permitted drinks that apply are:

- Free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times, including where food is served.
- Plain water (still or carbonated).
- Flavoured water that is sugar free (still only).
- Fruit-flavoured still drinks with no added sugar and a maximum of 0.5g total sugar per 100ml as diluted (can include sweeteners)
- Plain unsweetened and unflavoured semi skimmed or skimmed milk or lactose free milk.
- Plain soya, oat and rice drinks. Must be unsweetened or no sugar and fortified with micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.
- Tea or coffee without additions such as syrups, sprinkles, cream etc.

We are proposing to allow the current permitted drinks to be served up until September 2028, to allow schools to phase in to the new requirements.

## Whole school day standards (excluding breakfast/before school day)

### Increasing fibre in the School Food Standards

#### Starchy foods

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey<sup>6</sup> reports that fibre intake for young people is lower than it should be. Only 14% of primary aged children and 4% of secondary aged children are meeting the dietary recommendations on fibre. A diet meeting the recommendations for fibre is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and bowel cancer. We are proposing changes to starchy foods requirements, around the provision of brown, wholemeal or higher fibre pasta, rice and bread, which will help contribute to pupils' fibre intake.

We also propose that at least one portion of pulses should be included within or alongside all menu options once a week, to increase fibre consumption. This is in addition to any pulses schools choose to serve as part of their protein requirements (see 'protein', below).

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<sup>6</sup> [National Diet and Nutrition Survey 2019 to 2023: report - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91122/national-diet-and-nutrition-survey-2019-to-2023-report.pdf)

## **Food group A: starchy food (sub-divided as shown)**

A1: All types of bread, pasta, couscous, noodles, rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, millet, bulgar wheat and cornmeal.

A2: All types of bread to be a source of fibre (with at least 3g/100g) with no added fat or oil.

## **Summary of proposed new standards**

One or more portions of food from this group (A1) to be served every day and three or more different starchy foods each week.

At least 50% of pasta and rice served to be brown, wholewheat or white varieties with added fibre.

All bread to be a source of fibre (defined as containing at least 3g/100g of fibre). This would allow wholemeal breads, some seeded breads and higher fibre white breads such as those which are made with 50% whole grain flour and 50% white flour and with no added fat or oil.

Starchy foods that are cooked using fat or oil (including during manufacture) may be served on no more than two meal occasions each week and only when they form part of a meal. Examples of what this includes: chips, wedges, hash browns, focaccia.

Bread that does not contain added fat or oil must be available every day. This does not include brioche, focaccia, ciabatta.

## Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are a good source of vitamins, minerals and fibre, and should make up just over a third of the food you eat each day<sup>7</sup>. The current School Food Standards require one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables to be served daily.

**We are proposing** that grab and go options must also contain or be accompanied by vegetables or salad and all second courses should be accompanied by or contain a portion of fruit.

### **Food group B: fruit and vegetables (sub-divided as shown)**

B1: Fruit of all types, whether fresh, frozen or dried.

Fruit canned in water or juice.

Fruit based desserts (with a content of at least 50% fruit measured by the weight of the raw ingredients).

B2: Vegetables of all types, whether fresh, frozen or dried.

Vegetables canned in water.

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<sup>7</sup> [Eating a balanced diet - NHS](#)

## Summary of proposed new standards

Fruit and/or vegetables must be available in all school food service points (B1 and B2). At least three different fruits or vegetables each week.

One or more portions of vegetables or salad must be served as an accompaniment every day to all main meals. All savoury grab and go items must be accompanied by or contain one or more portions of vegetables or salad whenever served.

Vegetables do not include pureed vegetables, potatoes, canned pasta in tomato sauce or baked beans.

Grab and go examples include sandwiches, baguettes, paninis, pasta boxes, baked potato, pizza and meat products.

All desserts/second courses to be accompanied by or contain one or more portions of fruit (B1). At least three different fruits each week.

Fruit does not include fruit juice, smoothies and fruit purees. Canned fruit must not be in syrup.

Once a week fruit to be the only available dessert option in primary schools.

# Reducing sugar in the School Food Standards

## Healthier drinks

Currently under the School Food Standards, permitted drinks include: water (still or carbonated), fruit or vegetable juice; fruit combination drinks; hot drinks; as well as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, lactose free milk and some plant-based drinks.

To meet the recommended limits for free sugars - defined as sugars added to foods and drinks by manufacturers, chefs/cooks, or consumers, as well as sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, and fruit juices - **we propose** removing fruit juice and fruit-juice-based combination drinks from the list of permitted drinks.

Fruit juice and smoothies alone make up 15% of free sugars intakes in primary aged children, with the amount of free sugars in a small 150ml portion of fruit juice delivering three quarters of the maximum recommended free sugars for primary aged children.

We are proposing to implement the new requirements on permitted drinks in secondary schools through a phased approach. To support this transition, the current list of permitted drinks will remain in effect until September 2028, to allow secondary schools to bring these changes in gradually.

We recognise that older pupils typically have greater autonomy in their drink choices. To increase the range of suitable options in secondary schools whilst continuing to restrict fizzy drinks, we are proposing to expand the approved list of low-sugar drinks.

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In addition to water, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk and plant-based drinks, we are consulting on the inclusion of sugar-free flavoured still water and fruit-flavoured still drinks containing no added sugar or more than 0.5g total sugar per 100ml.

This proposal would permit certain no added sugar squash-type products, some of which would require on-site dilution. We are seeking views on the inclusion of these drinks and any operational considerations that may arise.

The updated standards continue to make clear that free, fresh drinking water must be available to pupils at all times during the school day, including at all points where food is served.

Looking ahead, we want pupils to form healthy drinking habits early. By not offering squash or similar sweetened options in primary schools, pupils will arrive at secondary school without the expectation that these products will be available in school. This may contribute to building a consistent culture of healthy drink choices across school stages.

There have been suggestions that it would be preferable for secondary schools to have the same drinks standards as primary schools, we would like to hear people's views on whether the list of drinks currently proposed in primary schools should also be used in secondary schools.

## Summary of proposed new standards

### **Primary schools** across the whole day:

The only drinks permitted are:

- Free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times, including where food is served.
- Plain water (still or carbonated).
- Plain unsweetened and unflavoured semi-skimmed or skimmed or lactose free milk.
- Plain soya and oat drinks. Must be unsweetened or no sugar and fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.

### **Secondary schools up until September 2028** across the whole day:

The drinks permitted are:

- Free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times, including where food is served.
- Plain water (still or carbonated).
- Semi-skimmed or skimmed or lactose free milk.
- Fruit or vegetable juice (maximum 150ml).
- Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks.
- Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey).
- Combinations of fruit juice and semi-skimmed or skimmed milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and semi-skimmed or skimmed

## Summary of proposed new standards

milk/lactose free milk; flavoured semi-skimmed or skimmed milk/lactose free milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey.

- Tea, coffee, hot chocolate.

**Secondary schools from September 2028** across the whole day:

The only drinks permitted are:

- Free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times, including where food is served.
- Plain water (still or carbonated).
- Flavoured water that is sugar free (still only).
- Fruit-flavoured still drinks with no added sugar and a maximum of 0.5g total sugar per 100ml as diluted (can include sweeteners).
- Plain unsweetened and unflavoured semi-skimmed or skimmed milk or lactose free milk.
- Plain soya, oat and rice drinks. Must be unsweetened or no sugar and fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12.
- Tea, coffee, without additions such as syrups, sprinkles, cream etc.

## Dairy and plant-based options

Children are consuming more than the recommended amounts of saturated fat. We therefore are seeking to limit the amount of saturated fat pupils get from dairy products in school food. We are also seeking to recognise the prevalence of plant-based options.

**The current regulations** set out a list of dairy products that can be offered and place a requirement on schools to offer semi-skimmed or skimmed milk and lactose free milk every day.

**We are proposing** to update the standards to include plant-based options that schools may offer alongside dairy products, and in addition to daily milk for drinking. We are also proposing that yoghurts should be lower sugar.

### **Food group D: milk, dairy and plant-based products (sub-divided as shown)**

D1: Semi-skimmed or skimmed milk and lactose free milk.

Plain unsweetened/no sugar plant-based drinks fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin, and vitamin B12.

D2: Cheese, yoghurt (including frozen), plant-based yoghurt (including frozen), fromage frais and custard.

Dairy yoghurt, fromage frais and custard to be less than 10g/100g total sugar and not contain non-sugar sweeteners.

**Food group D: milk, dairy and plant-based products  
(sub-divided as shown)**

Plant based yoghurts to be less than 7g/100g total sugar and not contain non-sugar sweeteners.

**Summary of proposed new standards**

A portion of food must be served from this group (D2) every day - cheese can only be used as a main ingredient on up to two days per week.

Semi-skimmed milk, skimmed milk or lactose free milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours. In addition, plain unsweetened/no sugar plant-based drinks that are fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin and vitamin B12, can be served.

Dairy yoghurt to be less than 10g/100g total sugar and not contain non-sugar sweeteners.

Plant based yoghurts to be less than 7g/100g total sugar and not contain non-sugar sweeteners and are fortified with each of these micronutrients: calcium, iodine, vitamin D, riboflavin and vitamin B12.

## Reducing foods higher in fat, sugar and salt

These proposed changes are aimed at reducing saturated fat, sugar and salt in school food.

Scientific evidence shows that too much salt<sup>8</sup> and saturated fat<sup>9</sup> can lead to health problems in later life, including the risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. Average population salt intakes are higher than government dietary guidelines<sup>10</sup>.

Further, children are consuming too much saturated fat with only 15% of children aged 4 to 10 years and 16% of children aged 11 to 18 years meeting recommendations<sup>11</sup>.

As such, **we propose** to limit processed meats and the frequency with which cheese is served as a main ingredient as well as looking to reduce the use of salt in condiments and spreads.

Children are consuming double the recommendation of sugars on average. The latest government dietary guidelines, based on advice from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition, recommend that free sugars should account for no more than 5%

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sacn-salt-and-health-report>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/saturated-fats-and-health-sacn-report>

<sup>10</sup> [National Diet and Nutrition Survey: Assessment of salt intake from urinary sodium in adults](#)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-diet-and-nutrition-survey-2019-to-2023/national-diet-and-nutrition-survey-2019-to-2023-report#nutrient-intakes>

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of a child's daily dietary energy intake<sup>12</sup>. We are therefore seeking to limit pupils' snacking on sugary food at school.

Nutrient modelling suggests that to reduce the sugar content of menus, sweetened baked goods and sugary desserts should be limited to once per week. As an example, based on the proposed new standards, schools could choose to serve fruit and yoghurt or items such as fruited buns on other days. We are proposing to phase some limits over two years in secondary schools.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sacn-carbohydrates-and-health-report>

## Summary of proposed new standards

No more than a total of two foods from these combined groups across the week. Food from any one of these groups cannot be served more than once per week (meat and vegetarian versions served simultaneously count once).

- Batter coated or breadcrumb coated
- Food including pastry - both sweet and savoury pastry items
- Processed meat, meat and poultry products, whether manufactured or homemade. Meat products must meet the legal requirements:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/3001/contents>

Processed meat: any meat that has been preserved by smoking, curing, salting or adding preservatives, including sausages, ham, bacon, burgers, meatballs, salami, pepperoni.

Meat and poultry products are foods where meat is an ingredient, even if the other ingredient is 5% water. A product containing meat also includes foods containing multiple ingredients.

No deep frying of foods during preparation.

No more than two portions of food where cheese (including plant-based versions) is a main ingredient per week, for example, pizza, macaroni cheese, paninis. This excludes food where cheese is only an optional topping, for example, spaghetti bolognese, jacket potato. This exclusion does not apply to bread-based products, such as sandwiches or baguettes.

## Summary of proposed new standards

**Phasing for secondary schools:** we are proposing to phase in this change. No more than three portions of food where cheese (including plant-based versions) is a main ingredient per week permitted from September 2027, reducing to two portions from September 2028.

In primary and secondary schools, the only permitted snacks (served outside of meal services) are vegetables and fruit (does not include dried fruit and processed dried fruit products, juice, smoothies and purees), and plain savoury crackers and breadsticks, with no added salt, sugar or fat.

This is a small change from the existing standards that currently permit fruit, vegetables, nuts, seeds with no added salt, sugar and fat. We have removed nuts due to allergens concerns in schools and added crackers and breadsticks with no added salt, sugar or fat to add additional items.

No confectionery, sweets, chocolate (except for cocoa powder), chocolate coated products, chocolate containing products, chocolate spreads, cereal bars and processed fruit bars.

Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked.

All condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful, for example ketchup or mayonnaise. These must be reduced sugar, salt and/or fat and no sweeteners.

Fruit spreads must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful and must be reduced sugar and salt and contain no sweeteners.

## Summary of proposed new standards

Savoury spreads must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful. And must be reduced sugar and salt and contain no sweeteners.

Foods and drinks containing non-sugar sweeteners must not be served in primary school.

Foods containing non-sugar sweeteners must not be served in secondary school.

Non-sugar sweeteners are synthetic and naturally occurring or modified non-nutritive sweeteners that are not classified as sugars.

Sugar, honey, syrups and non-sugar sweeteners must not be available to add to food or drinks after cooking or preparation.

No more than one portion of sweetened baked products or desserts (manufactured or homemade) can be served each week, these must contain at least 50% fruit or vegetables and no confectionery or chocolate. This applies across the school day.

**Phasing for secondary schools:** we are proposing to phase in this change.

No more than two portions of sweetened baked products and desserts can be served each week from September 2027, reducing to no more than one portion from September 2028.

Sweetened baked products include cakes, buns, muffins, tray bakes, doughnuts, brownies, biscuits and cookies, flapjack, sweet pastries and products containing pastry, crumbles, tarts,

## Summary of proposed new standards

pies, sponge puddings, scones. Excludes bread-based fruited buns, such as fruit tea cakes.

Desserts examples include ice cream, mousse/whips, cheesecake, frozen yoghurt, trifle, jelly, meringues, waffles, pancakes. Excludes yoghurt, custard, rice pudding. These must be less than 10g/100g total sugar.

A meal deal must include at least one portion of vegetables and/or salad and at least one portion of fruit. Meal deals must not include drinks.

## Protein

**The current regulations** require schools to serve meat or poultry on three or more days each week to ensure sufficient protein and minerals such as iron.

**We propose** to update this protein requirement so that schools are required to serve either meat, poultry, or pulses on three or more days each week, which can include beans, lentils, and chickpeas, but excluding baked beans. We anticipate that most schools will continue to serve meat or poultry on three or more days a week as they do now. Schools may choose to serve pulses as a source of protein, allowing for more choice and flexibility. Schools may also choose to use this flexibility to swap some of the meat and poultry served for pulses to enable more

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opportunity to source higher-welfare seasonal produce, which high quality British producers will be well-placed to supply.

Pulses are high in fibre and low in saturated fat and children are consuming too little fibre and more saturated fat than they require. This increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and some cancers later in life. We are proposing to require at least one portion of pulses being added to the main meal option per week, for example, adding pulses to a beef spaghetti bolognese. This would ensure that all schools provide sufficient protein and iron in all of their main meal options, including grab and go options. We are also updating the requirement so that on at least three days a week, vegetarian meals must use pulses as the protein source.

We expect schools to consult parents and carers when adopting any changes to their school food policies, considering any difficulties these policies could cause, and ensuring that the policies are clearly communicated when implemented.

Fresh tuna is no longer classified as an oily fish because it does not contain levels of long-chain omega-3 fatty acid levels comparable with oily fish, such as salmon and mackerel. While it is still a healthy source of protein, it does not count towards the three-weekly portion of oily fish. **We propose** updating the standards to align with UK health guidelines.

## **Food group C: meat, fish, eggs, pulses and other non-dairy sources of protein**

Meat and fish (in each case whether fresh, frozen, canned or dried), eggs, nuts, pulses and beans.

Other non-dairy sources of protein.

Any food containing meat together with a food from groups starchy food (A), fruit and vegetables (B) or milk, dairy and plant-based products (D).

Pulses include chickpeas and lentils.

Beans exclude green beans and baked beans.

## **Summary of proposed new standards**

A portion of food from this group to be served every day, (across both meat and vegetarian options if serving both).

A portion of meat, poultry, or pulses as the main protein source on three or more days each week. Vegetarian menu options must offer pulses as the main protein source three times a week.

Pulses include chickpeas and lentils and does not include baked beans.

## Summary of proposed new standards

At least once a week a portion of pulses should be included within or alongside all menu options.

Pulses include chickpeas and lentils, does not include baked beans.

**Phasing for secondary schools:** we are proposing to phase in this change. At least once every two weeks a portion of pulses should be included within or alongside all menu options from September 2027, increasing to at least once a week from September 2028.

In meat/fish serving schools, oily fish to be served at least once every three weeks.

Oily fish include herring, pilchards, salmon, sardines, sprats, trout, and mackerel

No more than two portions a week of vegetarian or plant-based products which are marketed as meat alternatives (manufactured or homemade).

Excludes plain mycoprotein, tofu and soya mince, chunks or pieces.

## Maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools

Following the introduction of the EYFS nutrition guidance<sup>13</sup> in September 2025, **we are proposing** to remove schedule 5 for school lunches provided at maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools from the School Food Standards.

Early years providers are required to have regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) nutrition guidance, meaning they must take it into account and should follow it unless there is good reason not to. The guidance was developed in collaboration with nutrition experts and sector representatives and is designed to help early years providers understand how to meet the existing EYFS requirement: ‘Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious’.

In future, maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools’ settings will only have one set of EYFS nutrition guidance to comply with when considering their meals service.

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<sup>13</sup> [EYFS nutrition guidance](#)

## Practical considerations

### Implementation of the School Food Standards

We would like to know what practical challenges, if any, you think schools might encounter when implementing the new School Food Standards, for example, communication with pupils and parents, supply-chain constraints, kitchen operations etc.

### Compliance with the School Food Standards

We recognise the importance of clear, nationally consistent arrangements for supporting and assuring compliance with the School Food Standards and are developing our wider approach. To underpin this broader compliance framework, we are setting out two targeted proposals to reinforce leadership and visibility in schools.

Governors and trustees have a collective responsibility to ensure compliance with the School Food Standards and are expected to challenge the senior leadership team to make sure the school is meeting its obligations.

We know many schools are already delivering high quality, nutritious meals and take their food provision seriously, developing a whole school culture towards healthy school food.

During our testing of our initial set of proposals, we saw good practice such as schools already choosing not to serve fruit juice and reducing the serving of cakes and biscuits.

**We propose** that a lead governor is appointed with designated responsibility for school food.

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We already recommend that governors work with the senior leadership team to develop a whole-school food policy. This policy should set out the school's approach to food provision, food education (including practical cooking), the role of the catering team within the wider school community, and the school's strategy for increasing the take-up of school lunches.

We believe that publishing a food policy, alongside school menus, on school websites provides pupils, parents, governors and trustees with a clear understanding of how the school offers healthy and nutritious food and drink, as well as opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy eating.

The process of developing such a statement also allows schools to reflect on what is working well and where improvements could be made. **We propose** that all schools be required to publish their food policy and menus on their websites.

## **Timeline**

### **Changes to be implemented from September 2027 and September 2028**

We want to give schools time to plan for these changes and will be setting the implementation date from September 2027.

We propose that the new standards take full effect for primary schools from September 2027. Most changes for secondary schools will also begin in September 2027.

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However, the requirements we plan to phase in for secondary schools: adding pulses to menu options, limiting cheese-based main dishes, restricting sweetened baked products and desserts, and introducing the healthier drinks list would start from September 2028.

While schools will have a year to get ready for the changes, any school that feels prepared may begin using the new standards before September 2027. The department welcomes and supports early adoption where schools feel able to do so.

# **Annex A: Consultation questions for online survey portal**

## **Section A: About you**

### **Confidentiality**

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential please explain why you consider it to be confidential. If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department for Education.

### **Privacy notice**

The personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) that you provide in response to this consultation is processed by the Department for Education as a data controller in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, and your personal information will only be used for the purposes of this consultation.

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The Department for Education relies upon the lawful basis of article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR to process this personal data as necessary for the conduct of this consultation, which is a task carried out in the public interest.

Your information will not be shared with third parties unless the law allows or requires it. The personal information will be retained for a period of 12 months following the closure of the consultation period, after which it will be securely destroyed.

You can read more about what the Department for Education does when we ask for and hold your personal information in our personal information charter, which can be found here: [Personal information charter - Department for Education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/Personal-information-charter-Department-for-Education-2022.pdf) ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

## **Statement on use of AI in consultation analysis**

We will be using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist in analysing responses to this consultation. The purpose of using AI is to identify themes, trends, and insights more efficiently and accurately, ensuring that all feedback is considered in a structured and transparent way. AI will not make decisions; it will support our analysis process, which will be reviewed and validated by our team to maintain fairness and integrity.

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1. Do you consent to the data and information you provide being held in accordance with UK GDPR as covered in the Department for Education's personal information charter?
  - Yes
  - No
  
2. Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?
  - Yes
  - No
  
3. In processing your data and meeting legal duties, the government may be expected to share information about your consultation response. In line with the privacy notice, would you like your response to be kept confidential?
  - Yes
  - No
  
4. As the government analyses the consultation findings, we may identify direct quotes to include in the published government response, in an anonymised way – may we use your feedback in this way?
  - Yes
  - No

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5. What area in England are you based in?

- North East
- North West
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- West Midlands
- East Midlands
- East of England
- South East
- London
- South West
- National

6. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

## Individual

7. Please select one description of your current role:

- Academic/charity/policy or research
- Chefs and catering provider/workforce
- Child or young person
- Faith group member
- Food producer/supplier
- Governor/Trustee
- Holiday, Activities and Food (HAF programme) provider
- Local authority
- Member of parliament/Member of the House of Lords
- Nutritionist/Clinician
- Parent
- School - primary school - non-faith
- School - primary school - faith
- School - secondary school - non-faith
- School - secondary school - faith
- School - special school
- School - trust leadership/central team
- Union
- Other - If other, please describe your role

Free text

If you are responding as an individual, we will consider the views within your response to this consultation to be your personal views.

## Organisation

8. What type of organisation are you responding on behalf of?

- Academic institution
- Catering company/organisation
- Faith group
- Farming association/organisation
- Food/drink manufacturer/supplier
- Holiday, Activities and Food provider (HAF programme)
- Local authority
- Public Health/nutritional organisation
- School - primary school- non-faith
- School - primary school - faith
- School - secondary school – non-faith
- School - secondary school - faith
- School - special school
- School - multi academy trust/school trust
- School food organisation/charitable organisation
- Union
- Wraparound childcare services provider
- Other:

Free text

9. What is your organisation's name?

Free text

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, we will consider the views within your response to this consultation to be those of your organisation and not necessarily your personal views.

## **Section B: questions on the proposed updates to the School Food Standards**

### **Breakfast and whole school day standards**

10. To what extent do you agree with the new rules about which foods and drinks can be offered at breakfast clubs before the school day begins?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

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11. Do you think processed meat should be permitted to be served at breakfast?

Free text

12. To what extent do you agree that honey should not be permitted?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

13. To what extent do you agree with the proposed change to the structure of the standards with separate standards for the whole of the school day?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

## Increasing fibre

### Starchy foods

14. To what extent do you agree with the proposed changes to the fibre requirements for starchy foods?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

## Fruit and vegetables

15. To what extent do you agree with the requirement to serve a portion of vegetables and/or salad with all grab and go main meals?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

16. To what extent do you agree to the changes so that primary schools should have at least one day a week where fruit is the only dessert option?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

## Reducing sugar

### Healthier drinks

17. To what extent do you agree to the proposed list of permitted drinks in primary schools?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

18. To what extent do you agree to the proposed list of permitted drinks in secondary schools?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

19. To what extent do you agree with the approach to introduce healthier drinks in secondary schools in stages?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

20. Do you have any views on whether drinks standards for secondary schools should be the same as, or different from, those for primary schools?

Free text

## Dairy and plant-based options

21. To what extent do you agree with the proposed changes to the dairy and plant-based requirements?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

# Reducing foods higher in fat, sugar and salt

## Foods higher in fat, sugar and salt

22. To what extent do you agree with the new rules restricting foods high in fat, sugar, and salt?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

23. To what extent do you agree with the new rules restricting the serving of cheese?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

24. To what extent do you agree with the plan to restrict the serving of cheese as a main protein option in secondary schools, in stages?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

## Reducing desserts

25. To what extent do you agree with the plan to reduce desserts in primary schools?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

26. To what extent do you agree with the plan to reduce desserts in secondary schools?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

27. To what extent do you agree with the plan to reduce desserts in secondary schools in stages?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered in this way:

Free text

## Meal deals

28. To what extent do you agree with the plan to set what can and can't be included in a school meal deal?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

## Protein changes

### Pulses

29. To what extent do you agree with the changes being suggested for pulses being included alongside main menu items at least once every week?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

30. To what extent do you agree with the plan to increase pluses in secondary schools in stages?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Protein

31. To what extent do you agree with the changes being suggested for protein in school menus?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way:

Free text

## Schedule 5 - nurseries

32. To what extent do you agree with maintained nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools having to comply with the EYFS nutrition guidance only?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

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## Overall question

33. To what extent do you think the proposed changes will improve the nutritional quality of school meals?

- To a great extent
- To some extent
- To a limited extent
- Not at all
- I'm not sure

## Section C: practical considerations

### Implementing new standards

34. What practical challenges, if any, do you think schools might encounter when implementing the new School Food Standards?

Free text

### Compliance

35. To what extent do you agree that schools having a governor with responsibility for school food would help ensure schools follow the School Food Standards?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

36. To what extent do you agree that schools publishing their school food policy on their website would help ensure they meet the School Food Standards?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

37. What practical methods do you think schools could take to help ensure they meet the School Food Standards?

Free text

38. What practical methods do you think government could take to help ensure schools meet the School Food Standards?

Free text

## Culture, equality and diversity

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), there are nine protected characteristics in the UK that shield individuals from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in employment, education, and service provision.

These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

39. What concerns, if any, do you have about the potential impact of these proposals on all individuals with protected characteristics?

Free text

## Environmental principles

The UK's five core [environmental principles](#), mandated by the Environment Act 2021, are integration, prevention, rectification at source, polluter pays, and precautionary principles. These principles guide UK ministers and policymakers to embed environmental protection, such as reducing pollution and preventing damage, into policy development from the outset.

40. Do you think the new School Food Standards could have any positive and/or negative effects on the environment?

- Positive
- Negative
- Don't know

Follow-on question to all answers: please explain why you answered this way

Free text

## Closing question

41. Do you have any further comments you would like to share with us?

Free text

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