

January 2015

To whom it may concern,

It is important that children eat nutritious, tasty food at school as fuel for learning, to help their growth and development and to help them develop lifelong healthy eating habits.

The Department for Education is delighted to be funding the Food for Life Partnership to deliver their 'Increase Your School Meal Take-up' project in junior and secondary, middle, PRU and special schools in the North of England, the Midlands and London.

This project is an important part of our strategy to increase the quality, take-up and economic viability of school meals. The independent review of school food published in July 2013, the *School Food Plan*, found that too many children are missing out on meals at school. The plan's authors, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Education, explored the reasons for low take-up, its impact on children and schools and set out 16 actions for government and others which will change this.

This project is one of those School Food Plan actions and is being delivered across the country by consortia headed by the Food for Life Partnership, the Children's Food Trust and the Design and Technology Association.

We have made great strides since the plan was published, including making school meals free for 1.5million additional infant pupils, introducing new easier to implement school food standards and making cooking and nutrition a statutory part of children's education until the age of 14.

But our ambition does not end here. Vital to this school meal revolution is the provision of tasty, nutritious meals in *all* schools; meals that children want to eat, that parents trust and that are served in a great dining and social environment. This creates the virtuous circle: the quality of the food goes up, the price comes down, and schools can further invest in quality.

Starting that virtuous circle can be a challenge, but it can be done. It takes willpower, imagination and persistence to win children over to school food and trim costs without compromising on quality. We are funding organisations who know how to make this happen; helping schools and caterers make simple and effective changes that will increase take-up of school lunches.

Places and funding are limited and I urge you to take up this opportunity so that your school can reap the health, education and financial benefits of increased school meal take-up and a whole school food culture, and so that you too can be part of school food's golden age.



David Laws MP

Minister of State for Schools