

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE

18th September 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**Implementation of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007
Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update members on the planned implementation of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 and inform members of the successful progress in increasing uptake of school meals in Highland.

1. The Programme of the Highland Council

1.1 The implementation of the Act will support the Programme outcome.

1.11 We will give a high priority to Highland's children being healthy and active and implement the Highland Play Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Since 2003, school meals have undergone a transformation due to the national 'Hungry for Success' (H4S) initiative. H4S focussed on encouraging pupils to make informed healthy choices through offering a wide range of appealing healthy food and drink to the whole school.

2.2 In 2000, three years prior to Hungry for Success, The Council's School Catering Services launched 'Smart Lifestyles' to promote healthier choices. Highland was therefore extremely well placed to take the Hungry for Success initiative forward and exceed the recommended standards. The Catering Service achieved a Council Quality Award for this work in 2002.

2.3 In Highland, in order to maximise the potential of several health initiatives, (H4S, 'Active Schools' and 'Health Promoting Schools') The 'Your Choice to Healthy Living' initiative was created to provide the opportunity to work in a cross-cutting manner to benefit children and young people, communities and Highland as a whole. Details on "Your Choice are provided in another report on this agenda. The Highland Council and NHS Highland have continued with this approach to ensure Health and Wellbeing is considered a key priority.

2.4 The "Your Choice" Health Action Group has developed a School Food and Health Policy, the policy meets both Hungry for Success and the legislative aspects of the School Act. The policy can be found at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrenservices/healthyliving/>

3.0 The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007

3.1 As a development of Hungry for Success, the Act places a legal duty on Education Authorities to ensure that the food and drinks provided on school campuses meet nutritional requirements set out by Scottish Ministers. This includes what is on offer at tuck shops or in the vending machine within the school campus.

3.2 The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act requires local authorities in relation to schools and hostels to:

- place health promotion at the heart of schools' activities
- ensure that food and drink served in schools meets nutritional requirements specified by the Scottish Ministers by regulations
- promote the uptake and benefits of school meals and, in particular, free school meals
- reduce the stigma associated with free school meals by requiring local authorities to protect the identity of those eligible for free school meals
- consider sustainable development guidance when they provide food or drink in schools

The Act also gives local authorities the power to provide pupils with healthy snacks and drinks, either at a cost or free of charge.

Further information on the nutritional standards on snacks and drinks and exemptions are detailed in appendix 1.

3.3 The Act does not include any guidance or direction concerning off campus mobile food retailers. It is recommended further investigation is required to assess local circumstances and bye laws on the location of mobile food and drink retailers in the vicinity of schools. This will include discussion with The Highland Council Licensing Board, Transport, Environment Community Services and Legal Services.

4.0 Timescale for Implementation of the School Act

4.1 The health promotion aspect of the bill came into force in January 2008. In Highland, all schools have been officially accredited as 'Health Promoting Schools'. Many schools are now in a position to renew their status and the existing scheme has been significantly revised to become mainstreamed in to core quality assurance processes. HMle inspectors will be incorporating this into school inspections as well as inspecting on compliance with the Act.

4.2 The nutrition element of the Act, previously planned for implementation in August 2008 has only been applied to primary schools with the compliance for secondary schools being delayed to August 2009. The Service is well prepared in terms of policy and practice and while compliance for secondary schools is not required until August 2009 it is recommended that in Highland we amend this to January 2009 for all 29 secondary schools.

4.3 Whilst the issue of mobile food retailers discussed in paragraph 2.3 above is yet to be clarified, it is felt important to present this report to the September meeting to allow schools time to amend for example some tuck shop operators in time for January 2009.

5. Support for schools for compliance with the School Act

- 5.1 The 'Your Choice' Health Action Group has produced guidance for schools to offer clarity and practical suggestions for mid-morning break and secondary schools in Highland. The guidance provides suggestions for compliant items and surveys that pupils can use in a participative learning process to audit tuck items.
- 5.2 The guidance is also relevant for other food provision at school outwith the school lunchtime. This may include community complexes to which pupils have access to during the day and vending machines.
- 5.3 It has been noted that many schools use the 'tuck shop' as an enterprise initiative thus promoting cross-cutting opportunities for learning. This is encouraged and the guidance produced can be used to support this.
- 5.4 Training in 'Food, Mood, Learning and Behaviour', has been delivered in Highland by the Child Health Lead Dietician and Health Promoting Schools. This training has now been re-designed to include all aspects of the School Act and will be on offer, free of charge to all professionals working with children and young people in Highland to support the implementation of the Act.
- 5.5 The 'Your Choice to Healthy Living' plan has been significantly updated to reflect implementation of the Act and the Draft Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Experiences of a Curriculum for Excellence. The latest version of the Your Choice Implementation Plan can be located on:
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrensservices/healthyliving/>

6. Increased Uptake in School Meals Since 2000

- 6.1 Through successful marketing and partnership working with school communities Highland has seen a significant increase in the uptake of school meals. In the years 2000/2001 to 2007/08, the number of school meals taken in schools in Highland has increased in excess of 40% from 2.18million to 3.07 million.

School Meals Served

Period	Total Meals	No of Days	Pro Rata Meals
2000-2001	2191599	191	2180125
2001-2002	2344039	184	2420475
2002-2003	2509658	188	2536356
2003-2004	2563550	190	2563550
2004-2005	2716186	188	2745082
2005-2006	2775191	196	2690236
2006-2007	2968780	190	2968780
2007-2008	2972380	184	3069305

NB Figures and graphs are appended in Appendix II of this report.

- 6.2 School meals in Lochaber were previously operated by the private company, Scolarest. Since January 2007 ECS catering services have solely operated the school catering needs of the council, the figures indicate a substantial increase in uptake since this operational change.

- 6.3 There are a number of factors requiring consideration when examining figures relating to the uptake of school meals. These include pupil absences, school closures and price. Prices have however been kept to a minimum and there has only been a rise of 45p for a meal since 2002.
- 6.4 It can be noted that many authorities in Scotland suffered a significant dip in uptake when Hungry for Success was implemented and healthier meals were introduced. This did have an initial impact on Highland figures however, since then uptake continues to rise.
- 6.5 Continued marketing, consultation and sourcing quality local produce and products will hopefully continue to assist in the success of the service and continued growth within our customer base.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 7.1
- 1) Agree to apply the provisions of Act in all Highland schools campuses from January 2009
 - 2) Agree a further investigation into local circumstances and bye laws on the location of campus mobile food and drink retailers in the vicinity of schools.
 - 3) Note the significant increase in school meal uptake since 2000/01 to date.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 3 September 2008

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Appendix I

Agreed nutritional standards for 'snacks and drinks'

- Compliance with the nutritional standards will enforce changes in the range of snacks and drinks on offer in the school. The nutritional standards are mainly on sugar, salt and fat content and in particular the size of the package both in snacks and drinks.
- No confectionery can be sold anywhere in the school. This means no chewing gum, cereal bars, processed fruit bars or sweets. No products containing chocolate, including chocolate chips, chocolate flavoured substances and chocolate coating are allowed. Cocoa powder in cakes, biscuits and puddings is acceptable
- Pre packaged savoury snacks must be no larger than 25g and lower in fat & salt. These can only be sold at break time. However, plain nuts, seeds and dried fruit (in any size pack) can be sold at any time.
- The drinks guidance is much stricter as sugary drinks are known to be one of the biggest factors in causing obesity and dental decay. The only drinks that can be provided in schools are water, milk, low sugar milk shakes, fruit juice / vegetable juice or combinations of these.
- Pupils must have easy access to free fresh drinking water throughout the school day, and consumption should be actively promoted.
- For schools, any food and drink provided, for example, at breakfast or after school clubs must comply with the nutritional guidance. This means that food and drink must meet nutritional specifications. Food and drink provided in school tuck shops, enterprise activities, prizes and rewards should comply with the and Fair Trade confectionery is not exempt.

Exemptions

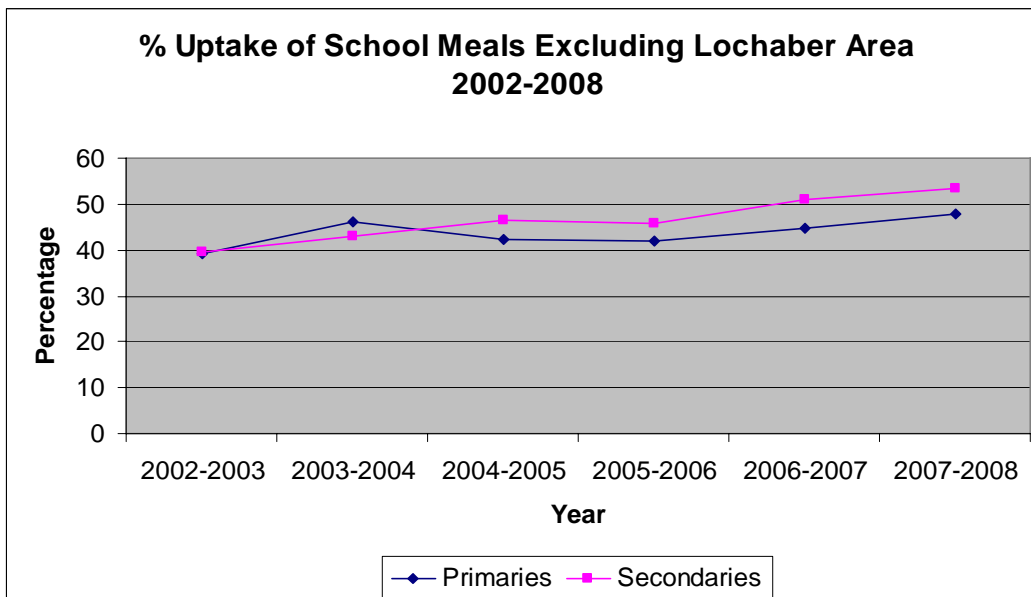
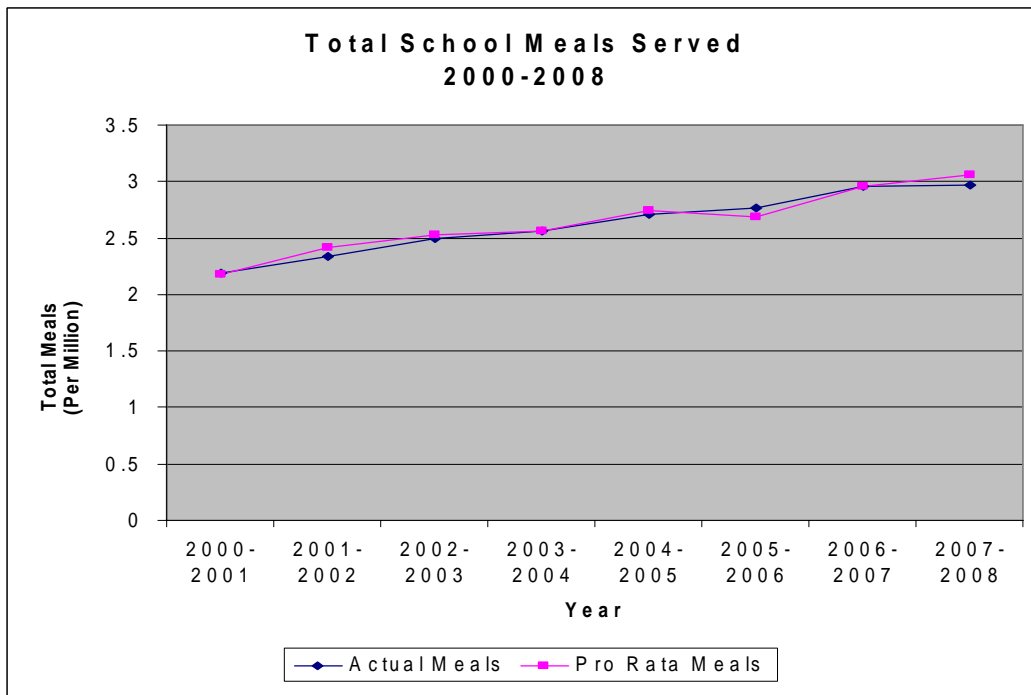
These regulations do not apply to food and drink:

- Brought onto the premises by pupils/parents e.g. packed lunches
- Used in teaching food preparation (provided it is not served as part of a school meal)
- Provided as part of a therapeutic diet
- Provided as part of a social, cultural or recreational activity. However, those involved in organising these events should still promote healthier options in keeping with the Health Promoting Schools ethos, guidance notes/toolkit and the ECS Schools Food, Nutrition and Health Policy

New products have been sourced which will comply with these specifications and we expect manufacturers to develop new drinks and snacks in due course.

Appendix II

Uptake of school meals provided by The Highland Council Catering Service



Appendix II (Cont)

