

NW RDA visit

Nick Brenton

**Association of London Chief
Education Officers**

January 2006

London child obesity

Table 3 Obesity prevalence among children, by Government Office Region

Aged 2-10 with valid BMI		2001-2002							
BMI status	Government Office Region								
	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East England	London	South East	South West
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Obese	18.3	15.0	11.4	14.5	15.8	14.1	18.2	13.4	14.0
Bases (weighted)									
Aged 2-10	394	950	750	615	748	791	830	1077	683
Bases (unweighted)									
Aged 2-10	355	806	634	540	636	693	701	922	588

London's health 2005

- In 2002, children and young people in London had the highest fruit and vegetable consumption of any English region (mean 3.1 daily portions aged 5-15 and 16-24 years), but this still falls short of the recommended five daily portions.
- Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities eat least fruit and vegetables: at increased risk of diabetes (x5) / CHD

A London Borough

- 72 primary, 14 secondary schools
- 23,000 meals a day
- 35% primary, 46% secondary entitlement to free school meals
- 76% take up
- School meals survey summer 2005

Borough survey findings 1

- 40% said meals meet National Nutritional Standards; 40% do not
- 6% are Healthy Schools
- 56% working towards Healthy School status; 38% not
- One in six schools has a breakfast club
- Very few schools have meals forum / steering group

Borough survey findings 2

- Governors very supportive and involved in meals service
- Divided over automated dinner money collection service
- Secondary: 20% allow only Y11 out, 20% only 6th form, 40% allow no students out at lunchtime

Kitchens – physical condition

- 67% - in good condition
- 22% - in bad repair
- 6% - poses health & safety risk
- 22% - equipment in bad repair / needing replacement
- 33% satisfied with state of dining area
- 22% - dining space is adequate

Staffing & contracts

- 78% have adequate number of staff
- 55% think staff are not adequately trained
- 60% would not recommend their current contractor
- Most schools did not know what type of contract they had or its renewal date.

Top priorities

- Support for implementing new guidelines on school meals
- Model policies from local authority
- Nutritional standards policy from local authority
- Training for kitchen staff – ‘desperate shortage of skills’ for cooking with fresh ingredients

Top priorities

- Reduction in the use of processed food
- Use of organic ingredients
- Provision of healthy meals
- More menu choice and control
- Better quality food supply

Lower priorities

- Council to monitor school meals service
- More support on legal aspects of meal provision
- More support on health & safety
- Interest in reverting to council provision of meals service

ALCEO: After Jamie . . .

- Decline in school meal uptake
- Involving parents, pupils, community
- Staff training
- Cost implications of fresh food preparation time
- Policing packed lunches (for meeting nutritional standards)
- London school kitchen limitations

ALCEO: Funding issues

- Delegated budgets mean inconsistency of provision
- Healthy food - engaging contractors
- Profit sharing = no incentive for healthy meals
- How to measure value for money?
- PFI – 25 year contracts
- 'a business unit not a subsidised service'

ALCEO: School food in context

- Social aspects of the lunchtime experience
- Dining hall environments
- Integrating meals into the school curriculum: whole day approach to nutrition
- Meeting ethnic, cultural and religious expectations – equality issues
- Behaviour management at lunchtime
- Timing of school meals

ALCEO: Criteria

- Caroline Walker Trust
- Scottish 'Hungry for Success' guidelines
- Soil Association 'Food for Life' targets
- Compliance with food standards versus freshness
- Sustainability and small providers
- Local providers versus making savings / aggregating contracts
- Local / school-based co-ops

Other best practice ideas

- Council-wide Awareness Day
- Trips to organic farms
- 'Growing for the future' project in schools
- 'Food for life' projects – food in relation to lifestyle
- Healthy eating plays
- Reinvest profit into school meals

Collaboration

- London Catering Client Group
- London In-House Catering Managers Group
- Benchmarking information
- Contract / policy documentation
- Ideas for engaging parents and pupils
- Data on uptake of meals
- Training catering staff
- Sourcing specialist foods (eg halal)

Schools White Paper

- 'Schools with Healthy School status have better results at Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 science. Healthy schools are more inclusive and pupils report other positive improvements such as diminished fear of bullying and a reduced likelihood of using illegal drugs. Another £9.3 million will be available to ensure that, by next year, half of all schools in England should be part of the programme, with the rest working toward Healthy Schools status by 2009.'

Schools White Paper

- 'We firmly support the recommendation that, from September 2006, lunches will need to meet tough food-based standards, with stretching nutrient-based standards to be introduced in future years. . . . We will legislate to permit nutritional standards to be applied to all food and drink supplied on school premises, and to change the duty to charge into a power to charge.'