

Review of Nutrition Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 – Report of the Technical Working Group and Consultation

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland

For information only to England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Key Points

This briefing will provide a general overview of the changes proposed to the Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 by the Technical Working Group. For more detail on the exact percentage changes in statutory nutrient standards, please refer to the tables contained within the full report [here](#).

A consultation on the proposals has also been released alongside the report which closes on 29 August 2018. The consultation paper can be viewed [here](#) and responses can be submitted online [here](#).

1.0 Remit of the Technical Working Group

The Technical Working Group of representatives from NHS Health Scotland, Food Standards Scotland and Education Scotland was set up to review the existing School Food and Drink Regulations (Scotland) 2008 and to “provide [current science and] evidence-based recommendations to progress school food further towards the Scottish Dietary Goals”.

The most up-to-date version of the Scottish Dietary Goals were revised in March 2016 and are available [here](#) on the Scottish Government website.

2.0 New Proposals for School Food and Drink

The recommended changes detailed below are based on “the most up to date consensus scientific evidence on diet and health”.

Changes to food and drink	
Fruit and vegetables provision	The proposal is to move from variety to full portions of fruit and vegetables. The proposed standard is “not less than two portions of vegetables and not less than one portion of fruit shall form part of the school lunch”.
Fruit juice, fruit juice combination drinks, smoothies and vegetable juice	Due to their high free sugar content, it is proposed that fruit juice, fruit juice combination drinks, smoothies and vegetable juice are to be removed from the permitted drinks list in schools.
Other high fat, salt or sugar foods (HFSS)	New standards are proposed for the following: sweetened and baked products, breakfast cereals, sweetened yoghurts, milk based desserts and pastry products. These standards are different for each of the above, but they generally limit portion sizes, the amount of total sugar, salt, fat and saturated fat per portion or limit how often they can be provided across a school week. Specifics can be found in Table 4 of the report.
Other changes to food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread and bread rolls must contain a minimum of 3g of AOAC fibre per 100g • The wording of ‘Savoury crackers, oatcakes or breadsticks’ has been updated to emphasise that these should be plain “to avoid inclusion of high fat, sugar and salt versions of these products”.

Changes to processes and standards	
Food provision outwith lunch	Standards have been proposed in relation to food provision across the entire school day so they cover food provision outwith lunch with the aim of reducing sugar over the entire day. The lack of standards in this area has led to high fat/sugar products which should be limited being available to buy from school or catering run tuck shops outwith school lunch.
Nutrient standards in addition to food standards	In order to ensure access to nutritionally balanced school lunches, it is proposed that Scotland maintains and enforces nutrient standards in addition to food standards. Other UK devolved nations have moved to solely using food based standards for school lunches.
Energy provision needs calculated daily rather than weekly	Nutritional analysis of school lunch menus is currently done across the full school week, but it is being proposed that instead all school lunches should meet a new energy standard on a daily basis (within acceptable tolerances).
Nutrient standard for sugars	The nutrient standard for sugars in school meals is proposed to be reduced from 11% non milk extrinsic sugar (NMES) to 7.5% free sugars as a percentage of food energy.

Changes specific to Primary School lunches	
There is a small drop in energy requirement from 557kcal to 518kcal.	
Fibre value has increased slightly to reflect the updated Scottish Dietary Goals (not less than 6.0g AOAC and not less than 4.6g NSP).	
Nutritional analysis calculations have been updated to take into account the total energy provided in school lunches in a day rather than over the course of a school week (Table 2 of the main document).	

Changes specific to Secondary School lunches

There is an increase in energy requirement from 664kcal to 745kcal.

Fibre value has increased slightly to reflect the updated Scottish Dietary Goals (not less than 9.0g AOAC and not less than 6.9g NSP)

The nutrient standards in secondary school are applied to a minimum of a two choice, two course lunch only due to the wider range of items on offer and the different ways that young people interact with the school catering service.

The exact nutrient changes in grams and milligrams for primary and secondary schools are contained within Table 1 and Table 5 in the main report respectively.

5.0 Consultation

The accompanying consultation will close on 29 August 2018. The consultation paper can be viewed [here](#) and responses can be submitted online [here](#). The consultation questions are copied below:

1. What are your views on our intention to amend the current school food and drink regulations to ensure children and young people are able to access more fruit and vegetables as part of their school day
2. What are your views on our intention to amend the current school food and drink regulations to ensure the amount of sugar children and young people can access over the course of the school day is reduced
3. What are your views on our intention to amend the school food and drink regulations to set a maximum for red and red processed meat in primary school lunches and for overall provision in secondary schools
4. What are your views on our intention to amend the school food and drink regulations to enable caterers to provide a service which better supports secondary age pupils to make balanced and nutritious food and drink choices as part of their school day
5. Do you have anything else you wish to comment on in relation to the nutritional content of food and drink provided in local authority, and grant maintained, schools in Scotland via the School food and drink regulations?

6.0 APSE Comment

APSE welcomes both the report of the Technical Working Group and the consultation on the proposals contained within the report. APSE would like to commend our local authority caterers on their achievements to date in delivering high quality, healthy foods compared to the alternatives available outside of the school gates. APSE encourages our members to respond to this consultation to make your views heard on the future of school nutrition.

Group discussions between local authority catering managers and officers take place at our regular APSE Scotland Soft FM advisory group meetings which are free to attend for APSE members. For more information on future meeting dates and agendas, please contact the APSE Scotland office at 01698 459051 or contact us using [this online form](#).

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