



# **Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act- Decisions on Nutritional Standards for Schools**

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and Email Contacts (Scotland)

CC: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts (England, Northern Ireland and Wales)

Decisions made by The Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram following work carried out by an expert working group

## **Key issues**

Update on decision regarding nutritional standards expected in schools

Minister for Children and Early Years agrees standards to be written into legislation

Relates to soft drinks, fruit juice and water combination drinks and confectionery within schools

## **1. Introduction**

APSE previously completed a briefing on the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 07/38 refers. At that time, it was anticipated that there would be an amendment to the Act following on from the May elections. The Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram has now had the opportunity to consider proposals and

decided on new nutritional standards for Scottish schools that will be written into legislation and apply from August 2008. He has decided to accept the majority of the Expert Working Group's revised proposals.

The Act places duties on local authorities and managers of grant schools to ensure that all food and drinks provided in schools comply with nutritional requirements, specified by regulations. The Working Group was set up in 2006 and put forward the proposals, which have been accepted or rejected by The Minister. Specifically he has decided not to accept the proposal for sugar-free soft drinks and fruit juice water combinations. The decisions include:

- Soft Drinks Not accepted the proposal that sugar-free soft drinks (still or carbonated) with no more than 0.5 grams of sugar per 100 millilitres should be allowed in secondary schools.
- Fruit juice and Water Combination Drinks Sugar free soft drinks have also been discounted from being for sale within schools. The Minister believes that it is important to allow juice and water combination drinks so as to retain an element of choice for young people in schools.
- Confectionery No confectionery should be provided in schools. However, The Minister has decided to adopt the same definition for confectionery as is used elsewhere in the UK which does not allow for chocolate chips.
- The Scottish Government is committed to improving the health of the nation and that includes improving the Scottish diet. The new regulations for schools will make a lasting contribution to improving the health of young people in Scotland. They will make sure that young people's palates are exposed to healthy food and children do not become exposed to a diet of salt and sugar at an early age. By setting high standards in schools, it is hoped that the food and drink sector will respond through product innovation to meet the overall objective of driving change and enabling children to make healthier food choices in the school setting.

## **2. SCHOOLS (HEALTH PROMOTION AND NUTRITION) (SCOTLAND) ACT – DECISIONS ON NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS**

	<b>EXPERT GROUP'S PROPOSAL FOR FOOD AND DRINK STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHESES</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>	The menu as a whole shall provide a choice of at least two vegetables and two fruits (not including fruit juice) as part of the school lunch.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Oily fish</b>	Oily fish shall be provided at least once every three weeks.	<b>Accept</b>

<b>Fats, spreads and oils</b>	Fats, spreads (and/or low fat spreads) and oils high in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids shall be used.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Sodium/salt and condiments</b>	No salt shall be provided to add to food after the cooking process is complete.  Condiments (if available), other than table salt, shall be dispensed in no more than 10ml portions.  Phased approach to reducing sodium levels in school lunch. Lunch should contain not more than 38% of the SACN target for salt (and by 2010 not more than 35%).	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Water</b>	Plain water (still or carbonated) shall be permitted	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Sugar-free soft drinks</b>	Sugar-free soft drinks (still or carbonated) with no more than 0.5g of sugars per 100g or 100ml shall be permitted only in secondary schools and only on the basis that research will be carried out to monitor intake and the impact of these drinks on school lunch uptake and dental health.	<b>Reject</b>
<b>Sugary soft drinks</b>	Not permitted	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Milk</b>	Only milk with a maximum total fat content of 1.8% is permitted. In addition, milk with a lower fat content may be provided.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Milk drinks</b>	Milk drinks, (hot or cold) and drinking yoghurts are permitted, with no more than 1.8g total fat per 100ml and no more than 10g total sugars per 100ml, provided the total sugars content does not exceed 20g per portion.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Soya drinks</b>	Soya drinks enriched with calcium, plain or flavoured, are permitted, with no more than 1.8g total fat per 100ml and no more than 5g total sugars per 100ml, provided the total sugars content does not exceed 10g per portion.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Fruit juice</b>	Pure fruit juices are permitted, with a maximum portion size of 200ml.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Fruit juice &amp; water combination drinks</b>	Not permitted	<b>Reject</b> fruit and vegetable juice and water combination drinks with a minimum of

		50% juice up to a maximum of 200ml of juice per portion is permitted. It is recommended that these drinks should not contain preservatives, colourings, flavourings, and/or sweeteners.
<b>Tea &amp; coffee</b>	Permitted in secondary schools only	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Savoury snacks</b>	No savoury snacks shall be provided as part of the school lunch, with the exception of savoury crackers, oatcakes or breadsticks.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Confectionery</b>	<p>No confectionery shall be provided as part of the school lunch or in any school food outlets.</p> <p>The Group defines confectionery as: "chewing gum, cereal bars, processed fruit bars, non-chocolate confectionery (whether or not containing sugar), chocolate in any form, any product containing or wholly or partially coated with chocolate and any chocolate-flavoured substance, but excludes cocoa powder and chocolate chips used in cakes, biscuits and puddings."</p> <p>In practice, this means that cakes, biscuits and puddings which may contain cocoa powder and/or chocolate chips will be permitted.</p>	<p><b>Accept</b></p> <p><b>Accept</b> proposal that cereal bars should not be permitted.</p> <p><b>Reject</b> proposal to allow chocolate chips in baked items.</p>
<b>Deep fried foods</b>	Menus shall not contain more than three deep fried items in a single week (including chips). This includes products which are deep fried in the manufacturing process. In addition, chips, if served, shall only be served as part of a meal.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Bread</b>	A variety of extra bread, including brown and wholemeal, shall be provided daily as a meal accompaniment for all pupils, at no additional	<b>Accept</b>

	charge	
<b>Artificial sweeteners &amp; preservatives</b>	No specific recommendation	We do not propose that artificial sweeteners and preservatives should be banned.
<b>Food and drink in school hostels</b>	Lunch standards should apply to both lunch and evening meal. Standards for food and drinks outwith lunch should apply at all other times.	<b>Accept</b> but not to apply at weekends.

### 3. EXPERT GROUP'S PROPOSAL FOR FOOD AND DRINKS OUTWITH THE SCHOOL LUNCH

	<b>EXPERT GROUP'S PROPOSAL FOR FOOD AND DRINKS OUTWITH THE SCHOOL LUNCH</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>	A variety of fruit and/or vegetables will be available in all school food outlets.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Fats, spreads and oils</b>	Fats, spreads (and/or low fat spreads) and oils high in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids shall be used.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Sodium/salt and condiments</b>	No salt shall be provided to add to food after the cooking process is complete.  Condiments (if available), other than table salt, shall be dispensed in no more than 10ml portions.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Water</b>	Plain water (still or carbonated) shall be permitted	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Sugar-free soft drinks</b>	Sugar-free soft drinks (still or carbonated) with no more than 0.5g of sugars per 100g or 100ml shall be permitted only in secondary schools and only on the basis that research will be carried out to monitor intake and the impact of these drinks on school lunch uptake and dental health.	<b>Reject</b>
<b>Sugary soft drinks</b>	Not permitted	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Milk</b>	Only milk with a maximum total fat content of 1.8% is permitted. In addition, milk with a lower fat content may be provided.	<b>Accept</b>

<b>Milk drinks</b>	Milk drinks (hot or cold) and drinking yoghurts are permitted, with no more than 1.8g total fat per 100ml and no more than 10g total sugars per 100ml, provided the total sugars content does not exceed 20g per portion.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Soya drinks</b>	Soya drinks enriched with calcium, plain or flavoured, are permitted, with no more than 1.8g total fat per 100ml and no more than 5g total sugars per 100ml, provided the total sugars content does not exceed 10g per portion.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Fruit juice</b>	Pure fruit juices are permitted, with a maximum portion size of 200ml.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Fruit juice &amp; water combination drinks</b>	Not permitted	<b>Reject</b> fruit and vegetable juice and water combination drinks with a minimum of 50% juice up to a maximum of 200ml of juice per portion is permitted. It is recommended that these drinks should not contain preservatives, colourings, flavourings, and/or sweeteners.
<b>Tea &amp; coffee</b>	Permitted in secondary schools only	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Savoury snacks</b>	Only pre-packaged savoury snacks which meet the Food Standards Agency's <i>Nutrient Specifications for Manufactured Products</i> for savoury snacks shall be available outwith the school lunch.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Confectionery</b>	No confectionery shall be provided as part of the school lunch or in any school food outlets.  The Group defines confectionery as: "chewing gum, cereal bars, processed fruit bars,	<b>Accept</b>

	<p>non-chocolate confectionery (whether or not containing sugar), chocolate in any form, any product containing or wholly or partially coated with chocolate and any chocolate-flavoured substance, but excludes cocoa powder and chocolate chips used in cakes, biscuits and puddings.”</p> <p>In practice, this means that cakes, biscuits and puddings which may contain cocoa powder and/or chocolate chips will be permitted.</p>	<p><b>Accept</b> proposal that cereal bars should not be permitted.</p> <p><b>Reject</b> proposal to allow chocolate chips in baked items.</p>
<b>Deep fried foods</b>	No fried foods shall be available outwith the school lunch.	<b>Accept</b>
<b>Artificial sweeteners &amp; preservatives</b>	No specific recommendation	We do not propose that artificial sweeteners and preservatives should be banned.

#### 4. Conclusion

Placing the role of local government at the heart of activity in this area is important and should not be overlooked by councils. School vending operations can only be as 'healthful' as the products the machines vend, but school vending can complement and enhance a nutritionally sound catering provision. In order to achieve this, a whole school approach to food and health issues is absolutely essential. As there may be an impact on gross income generated due to the change in vending content, APSE would therefore propose that this impact should be addressed through transitional funding brought forward to facilitate its implementation.

The requirement on local authorities to consider sustainable development when they provide food or drink in school should be recognised as an area where school meals can make a significant difference to communities in social, economic and environmental terms. School food is a catalyst for cultural and cognitive change in communities. Health, diet and awareness of food issues should be linked to both Public Health and Sustainable Development Objectives.

APSE believes that this opportunity to tackle the way children eat is an important part of life and is aimed at beating obesity in Scotland. With a more concerted effort to driving change at a local authority level, whilst placing itself at the core of the 'healthy living agenda' we may see a change for the better.

I would be interested in the views of authorities in relation to these nutritional standards and would welcome feedback as I am considering compiling a response to

the Scottish Government to reflect council's views and to whether the proposals will enhance the uptake of food within schools.

Should you be willing to do so, please reply to me direct with your views and I will incorporate it. [ptapse@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:ptapse@ukonline.co.uk)

**Pat Taggart**  
**Principal Advisor**