



fuse

The Centre for Translational
Research in Public Health



“...Could I have some more please, Sir?...”

School meals: the potential to impact on inequalities and obesity

Venue: Sunderland University, City Campus, Gateway 2

Date: Tuesday 9th April, 2013 – 9:30-15:30

Introduction – Childhood obesity is a longstanding concern. Attempts to reduce rising prevalence have led to many intervention projects. Government intervention can be seen in the re-introduction of nutritional standards to school meals previously removed in the 1980s. However, the effectiveness of this intervention remains unknown, and several projects are addressing this issue. Recent legal changes which free academies from providing meals based on nutritional standards raise concerns over food quality. Alongside this, the school fringe is an area of competition from fast food and convenience outlets which can contribute significantly to student's dietary intake.

There is also the question of tackling inequalities. In deprived areas where children may rely on the school meal as their main meal, and is potentially the healthiest option, addressing the stigma associated with free school meals is essential.

Aims – This meeting will review current policy, practice and research on school meals from a public health perspective, and present current research of relevance to the promotion of healthy nutrition among school children.

Who should attend? This joint meeting aims to bring together those involved in school meals research, the school meals system, academics and service providers, so will be of interest to a broad audience from all sectors. This meeting is intended to engage with those from all areas linked to the topics introduced above, foster good relationships, allow knowledge transfer from local to national level and create networks between academia, policy, and practice.

On-line **registration** is available for this QRM on the Fuse website at www.fuse.ac.uk
Please note spaces are limited, so early registration is advised.

Finding Sunderland University City Campus: Maps and travel information may be found at <http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/city/travelinformation/mapsoftheuniversity/>

“...Could I have some more please, Sir?...”

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9:30 – 10:00 Registration, Tea & Coffee

10:00 - 10:10	Welcome & Introduction by Chair	Prof Ashley Adamson
	PhD projects: environment to policy	
10:10 - 10:25	School meals policy in perspective: legislation & child growth	Vicki McGowan
10:25 - 10:40	A world unto itself: space, power & sociality in the dining hall	Erika McClure
10:40 - 10:55	School lunch: does it really matter?	Suzanne Spence
	School food & obesity	
10:55 - 11:25	School food, packed lunches and children's nutrition & health	Dr Michael Nelson
11:25 - 11:45	<i>Tea & Coffee</i>	
	Free school meals: inequalities and impact	
11:45 - 12:15	Stigmatisation, discrimination & the administration of FSM	Sara Bryson
12:15 - 12:45	The UK nutrition recession: are school meals the answer?	Siobhan O'Neill
12:45 - 14:00	<i>Lunch: Cookery demonstration/power walk</i>	Amanda Donnelly /Louisa Ells
	School meals: the impact	
14:00 - 14:20	Impact of school meal type on fruit & vegetable consumption in London school children aged 6 to 10 years	Dr Charlotte Evans
14:20 - 14:40	The Food for Life Partnership: impact on health, education & sustainability	Amanda Donnelly
	School meals & social media	
14:40 - 15:00	Can social media increase school meal uptake?	Karen Fewell
15:00 - 15:30	Panel discussion & closing remarks	

Close of meeting



Can Social Media
Increase School Meal Uptake?
@digitalblonde

I AM ON TWITTER, FACEBOOK,
FOURSQUARE, LINKEDIN,
PINTEREST, YOUTUBE AND EVERY
OTHER NETWORK I CAN THINK OF

WHY?



Social
media is
not a
magic
solution

**Social media doesn't fix anything.
It just amplifies things. If your
restaurant sucks, it just sucks
harder in social media. It doesn't
make your chicken fingers taste
better or your beer taste bolder.
Social media is not a good place to
go if you're terrible at what you do.**

Scott Stratten @unmarketing

facebook

IF
YOU THINK
ADVENTURE
is
DANGEROUS
TRY ROUTINE
it's LETHAL

The
solution
isn't to
ignore it

#NeverSeconds

My primary school daughter is blogging her £2 school lunch experiences. I'm speechless. <http://t.co/4UT9LZms> Please comment. Tue May 08 16:41:52 2012

“Social media is better at saving money than making money”

@JeremyWaite

Stop trying to use social media
with a traditional marketing
approach

90%
Listening

10%
Talking

Social media is the best piece of market
research you never commissioned



What can you learn from @VirginTrains?

Listen



Customer
Service



Operations



Marketing/PR
Sales

Social is part of all these departments

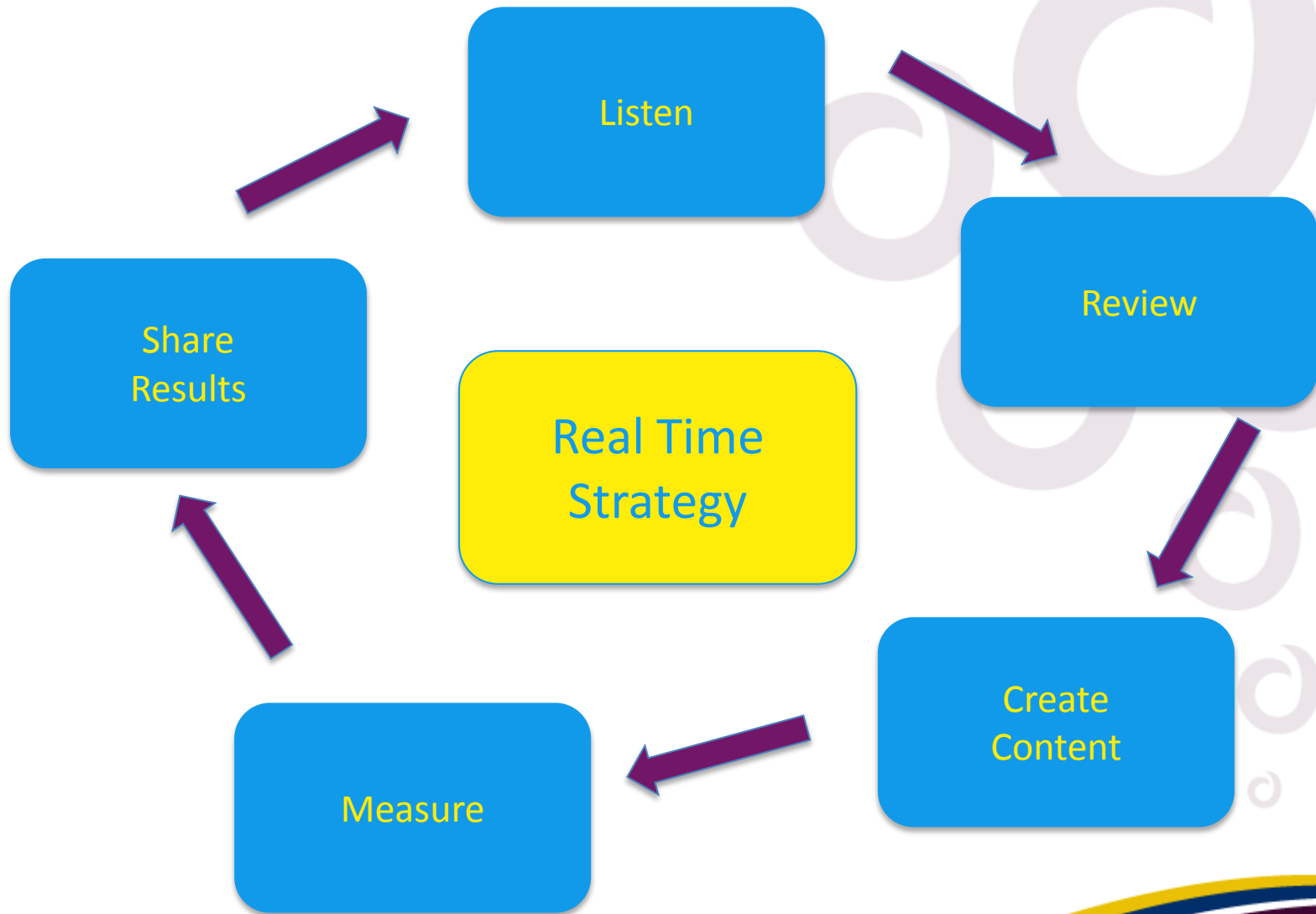


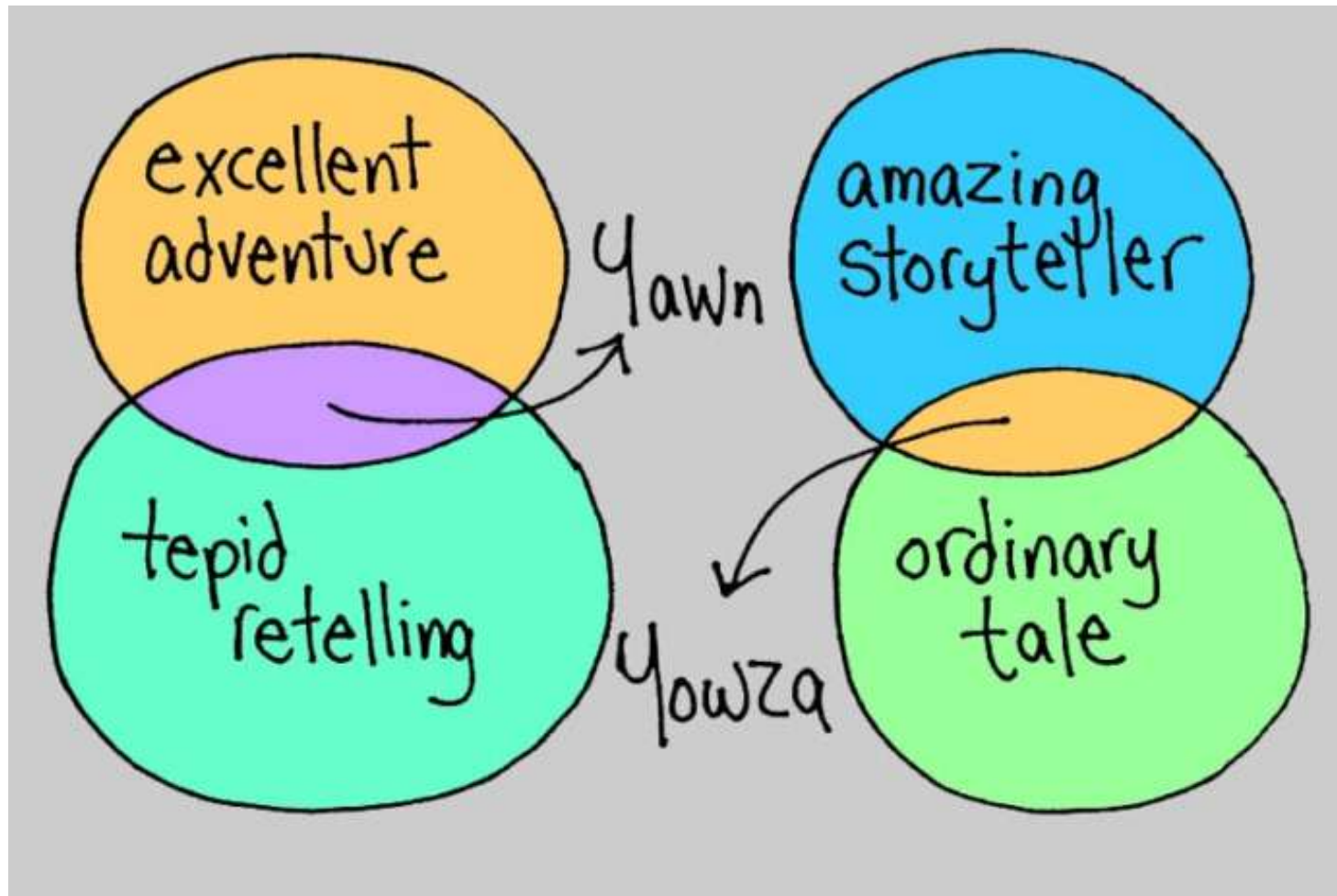
Digital Mums

- The average age of a new mum is 29, so from the start mums tend to be digital savvy
- Nearly **80 % of Mums use social media** compared to 51% for the average person
- More likely to have a smartphone, with 78 % of mums owning one compared to the UK average of 39 %
- Mums 'Like' an average of 8.5 brands on Facebook

Conversations

- 1 billion Facebook users sharing 30 billion pieces of content on the site every month
- 400 million tweets a day from 200 million active monthly users
- 60% of Twitter users login via mobile devices





Why do people care? Where would they share? < 5 Seconds

COMPANIES THAT CARE ABOUT
SOMETHING BIGGER
THAN SELLING THEIR PRODUCT
SELL MORE OF THEIR PRODUCT



Not Easy, Not Free

OUR SOCIAL TEAM WORKS 9-5



#BLONDEMOMENTS
@digitalblonde

#GdnLunch



guardian

Making a school packed lunch this morning? Tweet us a pic of its contents with the tag #GdnLunch gu.com/p/3eg7x/tw



paulcoxon

I once found a bag of Monster Munch (beefy) in little Ptolemy's school lunchbox. No Radio 3 for a week! #harshparent #GdnLunch

1 day



MTJAM

Oh God, #GdnLunch is middle-class one-up-mumship at its worst. Organic quinoa-coated carrot sticks for Verity...



LaFemmeFlaneuse

Yes let's tweet kids packed lunches never you mind that there are kids who have no packed lunches to take photos of & tweet. #GdnLunch



Claire_Phipps

Send us a pic of your school lunchbox gu.com/p/3eg7x/tw Warning: all @guardian quinoa/muesli jokes have already been done #gdnlunch



#GdnLunch: The best alternative tweets

In response to a Guardian callout to see what's inside the UK's packed lunch, the Twittersphere took the cue to turn the #GdnLunch hashtag into something completely different – here's the best of the alternative tweets



mrianthomas
@mrianthomas

@MTJAM Splendid! #GdnLunch is an 'I shop at Waitrose because...' just waiting to happen :-D

2 DAYS AGO



Luke O
@lukeosullivan

#GdnLunch lard, pork scratchings, a egg

2 DAYS AGO



Jayne Ferst
@jayneferst

Snoopy lunchbox. Orange squash. Cheese sarnie (imprint of mum's thumb). Mint club biscuit. Deep envy of anyone with a wagon wheel. #GdnLunch

2 DAYS AGO



Lunch for the twins #gdnlunch pic.twitter.com/wFtRr9qTLy

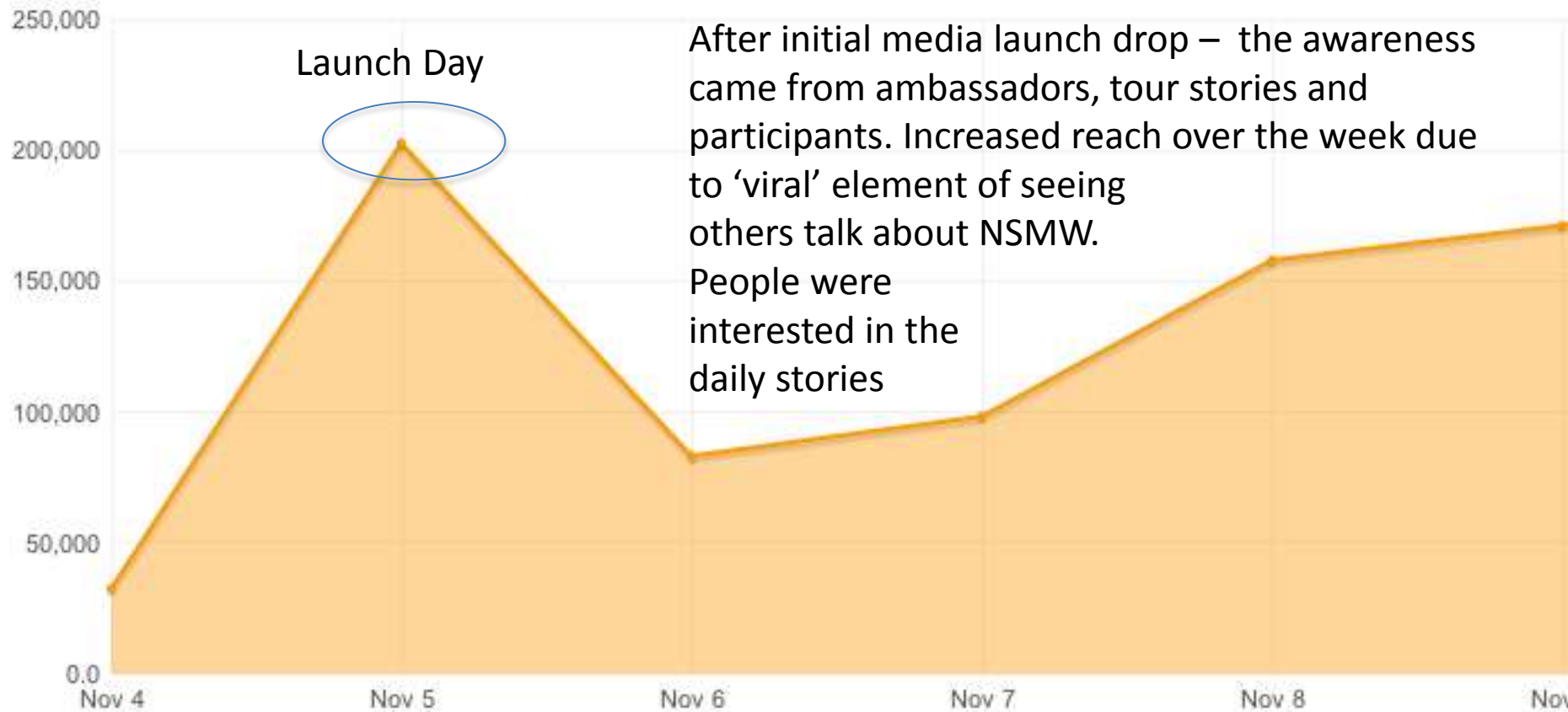
VOICE OF CALAMITY... · 2 DAYS AGO



People want to talk about food



@NSMW Twitter Reach



After initial media launch drop – the awareness came from ambassadors, tour stories and participants. Increased reach over the week due to ‘viral’ element of seeing others talk about NSMW. People were interested in the daily stories

International School Meals Day

- Started 5 weeks prior
- 450 followers (all genuine not purchased)
- Started with the influencers - interact
- Following built by people sharing content – good practice

10



Friday 8th March 2013
Worldwide
www.internationalschoolmealsday.com



Staff at Cranhill Primary, Glasgow, UK embrace USA-theme day for International School Meals Day

— 1 week ago

[Blog from Ysgol Kingsland School about ISMD →](#)

Some great photos of their Spanish day.

— 1 week ago

Making a meal of it - Glasgow →

— 1 week ago



Pupils get the flavour of
International School Meals Day →

— 1 week ago



This is a fantastic video from Get Reading about the International School Meals Day activity in Redlands Primary School, Reading, England

— 1 week ago

#international school meals day #school meals
in reading

#ISMD2013

284,457

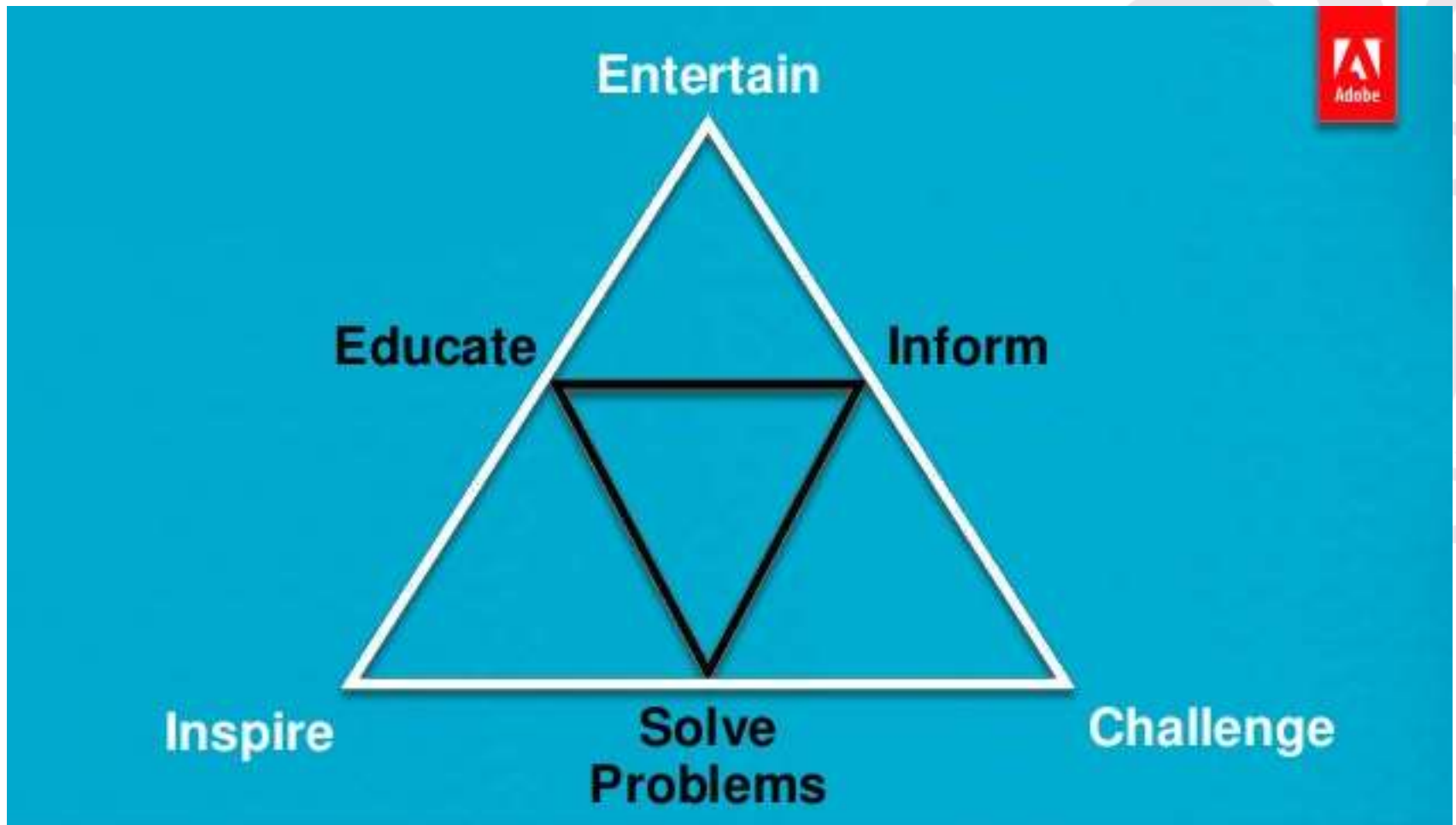
accounts reached

@intschoolmeals

348,037

accounts reached

- NO budget
- Time investment



Purpose Pyramid @jeremywaite

More mobile phones in the world than there are
toothbrushes



#BLONDEMOMENTS
#BLONDEWIGS



Jamie Oliver was honored by Harvard School of Public Health for his substantial achievements in working to end the childhood obesity epidemic.

In his 2012 acceptance speech, Jamie makes some interesting remarks about where he thinks the 'real food revolution' will come from.

Referring to the mobile phone, Jamie says "I hope that this could change the world".

"It's starting to in Africa, communications between people - we really basic stuff. You know what we are sending silly messages, pictures and porn. In Africa it is really important stuff like water."

"My wish is that in the next three years a real food revolution happens. As mental as Facebook, who would have thought that."

Holding the mobile phone, "I hope that something beautiful, that is as loved by rich and poor.....could help slowly drive the American, the British, the global public, in to a better, healthier future. I believe it, I really believe it. We can't say it can't happen because too many things that are bonkers have already happened."

"Without a doubt, modern-day health is a basic human right. My uncompromised belief is that whether your English, American or any dude on the planet, I believe that most of the time we will make great decisions if we are informed properly. And therefore that gives us hope and we could really do with that right now."

Jamie Oliver | Harvard | Obesity | Childhood obesity | World Leadership Day

3 hours ago

Share



Slightly geeky blonde & his kid with strategy to say no to a challenge. Bangs on about social media with particular reference to the hospitality and foodservice industries.

Known to have a few too many. #BlondeMoments - But learns from every incident.

Curator of #LegoDB
<http://legoddb.tumblr.com>

Search

Me, Elsewhere



"I hope that this could change the world"

Holding the mobile phone, "I hope that something beautiful, that is so loved by rich and poor.....could help slowly drive the American, the British, the global public, in to a better, healthier future. I believe it, I really believe it. We can't say it can't happen because too many things that are bonkers have already happened."

@JamieOliver

<http://DigitalBlondeMoments.Tumblr.com>



“Without a doubt, modern-day health is a basic human right. My uncompromised belief is that whether your English, American or any dude on the planet, I believe that most of the time we will make great decisions if we are informed properly. And therefore that gives us hope and we could really do with that right now.”

@JamieOliver

Can social media help increase
School meal uptake?



@digitalblonde

Food for Life Partnership



Changing food culture in schools



Amanda Donnelly

Commissioning Manager (North of England)

The Food for Life Partnership...



...is a **complex community initiative** with **multiple outcomes** that **uses food to engage** young people and their families, and nudge them towards the **behaviours that matter** for public health, sustainability and education.



An holistic approach to food



- **Great school food:**
 - Provide fresh, well-sourced and nutritious meals
 - Minimum 75% unprocessed and all meat from assured farms
 - Improve overall lunchtime experience
- **Education**
 - Practical cooking and growing
 - Farm visits
 - Pupil voice
- **Extending reach**
 - Engaging parents
 - Sharing with the local community



Food for Life Catering Mark



- Rigorous, independent catering industry standard
- A step by step award scheme that provides a framework to source good quality food:
 - Freshly prepared, using seasonal, local and organic ingredients where possible
 - Free from undesirable additives and GM ingredients
 - Meat produced to British welfare and quality requirements
- Accredited meals served in 5,146 schools through the UK
- 700,418 Catering Mark school meals per day



The Food for Life Partnership



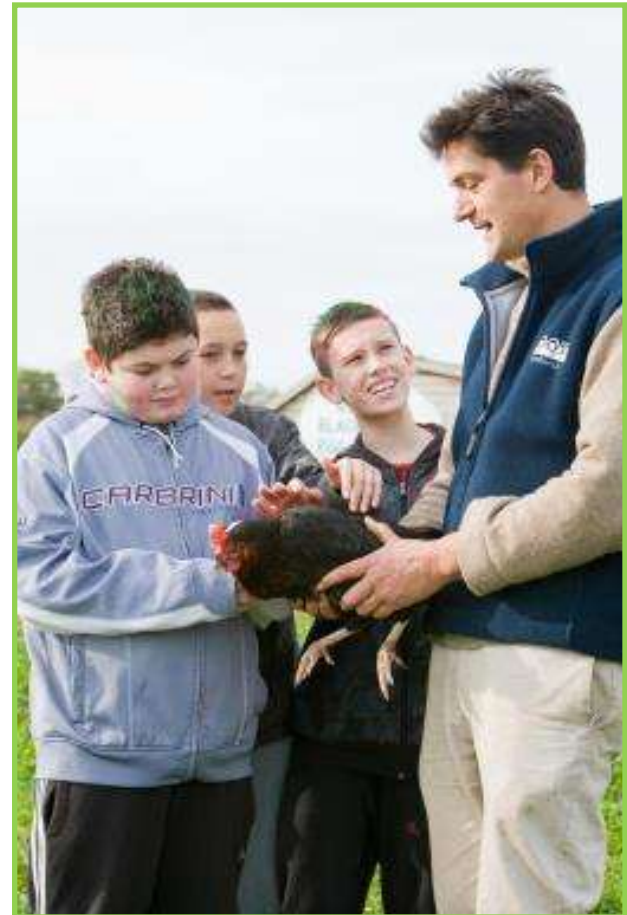
Expert partners



The Food for Life Partnership



<http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/Whygetinvolved/Ourimpact.aspx>



FFLP schools...

4,500 enrolled in England



683
schools



142
schools



20
schools



Evaluating impact



- 3-year programme evaluation by the University of the West of England (UWE) and Cardiff University
- Supporting studies by New Economics Foundation (NEF), National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and Centre for Research in Education and the Environment (CREE)



University of the
West of England



Evaluating impact



Complex initiatives are challenging to evaluate!

- Many levels of change
- Response to changing circumstances
- Long term outcomes
- Many varied objectives (all associated with the vision of good food culture)

Mixed methods

- Pre and post cross sectional study of flagship schools,
- Process evaluation studies.

The impact



45%

of parents report eating more vegetables as a result of the Food for Life Partnership programme.

twice

as many primary schools received an Outstanding Ofsted rating after working with the Food for Life Partnership.

The number of children eating five or more portions of fruit and veg increased by

28%

in Food for Life Partnership Primary Schools



Free school meal take-up increased by an average of

13%

 points in Food for Life Partnership Schools

For every £1 invested in Food for Life menus, the social, economic and environmental return on investment for the local authority is

£3



Free School Meal uptake



Over a 2-year evaluation (July 2008 – September 2010)

FSM Uptake increased

- + **13%** points on average
- + **20.9%** points in Secondary schools
- + **21%** points in schools achieving FFLP's Silver or Gold award

Compared to national figures (2009 – 2010)

- + 0.2% points in Primaries
- + 2.7% points in Secondaries



School meal uptake



- **School Meals** figures increased
 - + **3.7%** in year 1, + **5%** in year 2
 - At same time, national figures decreased - **3.7%** in Primaries



Fruit and veg



Fruit and veg intake

An increase in the number of primary school-age children reporting eating:

- 5 pieces of fruit and veg a day went up 5% points to 21%
- 4 pieces of fruit and veg a day went up 12% points to 49%

Significant positive associations between pupil participation in cooking, growing, farm visits and these reported increases.

School Meals & SROI



- **NEF:** for every £1 invested in FFLP menus, there is a return of over £3 in value to the local economy and society.
- Most of this value lies in local economic opportunities around supplying local, seasonal food, and resulting employment.



Learning Impacts



Twice as many FFLP primary schools rated outstanding by Ofsted following their participation (37.2% compared to 17.3% pre-enrolment).

Attainment levels in FFLP schools increased at a greater rate than the national average.

NFER

Head teachers report a positive impact on pupil behaviour, attention and attainment.

"In addition to all the other things, the biggest impact has been in engagement, enjoyment, learning, their learning behaviours have improved, they are very positive."

Emotional health & wellbeing



“Some of the less academic children have found they have strengths in practical areas which improves their self esteem.”

“One of the best opportunities the children have had to see that there is another life outside the estate.”

“The hands on FFLP activities have proved very effective in engaging or calming some of our children with learning or behavioural difficulties.”

“The Partnership gives pupils a voice.”

Greater than the sum of its parts



“Analyses of student characteristics show statistically significant associations between healthy eating and FFLP related behaviours – such as participation in cooking and growing at school or at home; participation in farm and sustainable food learning; and attitudes to school food.”



- Orme et al, 2011, p.107



Our awards



2012 Health Promotion and Community Wellbeing Award



2011 BBC Food & Farming
Derek Cooper Award

What the schools say



“Being part of the Food for Life Partnership is the best initiative that we as a school have undertaken in the last 10 years. It isn’t about ticking boxes, it’s about hands on experiences for the children which will stay with them for life.



“It gives the children skills which have disappeared over the last generation and prepares them for their future.”

- Penny Wetton, Headteacher
Helpringham Primary, Lincolnshire



Commissioned local FFLP programmes



FFLP projects have been commissioned in 9 local areas across England since the start of 2012

Lincolnshire, Calderdale, Devon, B&NES, Warwickshire, Kirklees, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Cambridgeshire



Why FFLP is commissioned

“I have commissioned FFLP because I see them as an integral part of the overarching prevention strategy which underpins our life course approach to childhood obesity in Lincolnshire.

“They deliver an excellent programme that schools love and that is backed by a sound evidence base. They have also proven to be excellent partnership workers here in Lincolnshire.”

- **Lynne McNiven, Assistant Director of Public Health, NHS Lincolnshire**



Thank you!



Amanda Donnelly
Food for Life Partnership
adonnelly@soilassociation.org



Impact of school meal type on fruit & vegetable consumption in school children aged 6 to 8 years

By Dr Charlotte Evans

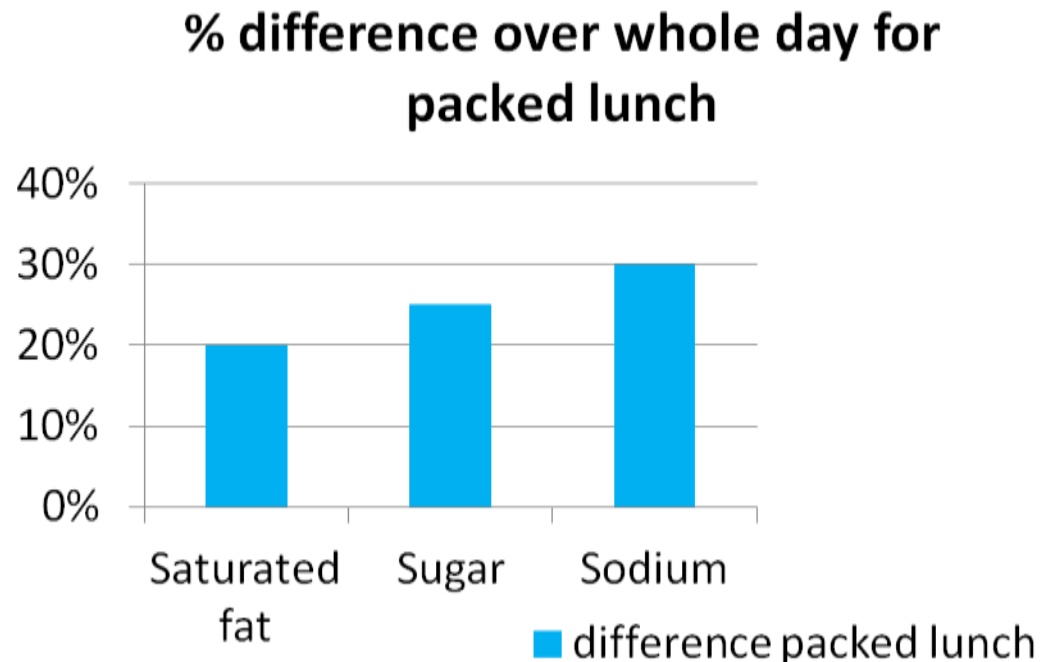
- To briefly review the evidence for daily nutrient differences between children having school meals and packed lunches
- To briefly look at the differences in daily fruit and vegetable intake between children having school meals and packed lunches and explore any associations with levels of deprivation



A review of studies between 1990-2007 reporting daily nutrient intake by school meal type concluded that children who had packed lunches had higher saturated fat, sugar and sodium intakes (all p values < 0.05).

- Saturated fat 5g higher
- Sugar intake 14g higher
- Sodium intake 350mg higher

Reference: Evans et al., BJN, 2010.



For this analysis we used data from Project Tomato trial

Data collected: June 2007

Sample: 2709 children

Age of children: 6 to 7 years

Location: 54 primary schools across
England

Aim of the study: to maintain fruit
and vegetable consumption once free
school fruit and vegetables no longer
available in year 3



- Statistical analyses were carried out using STATA 12 software
- Multilevel regression models were used to take account of clustering of children within schools (one class per school was sampled)
- Adjustment was made for gender, age, deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation) and ethnicity (white/non white).

Dietary assessment tool: CADET



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School:

CADET

Child and Diet Evaluation Tool

Pupil:



This diary belongs to:

Pupil Name:

Year Group:

Parent checklist-important

Please tick to indicate you have completed the CADET

Part 1 pages 4-11 ☐

Part 2 pages 12-14 ☐



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NFV-3414

National Foundation for Educational Research, The Mere, Upton Park,
Slough, Berks, SL1 2DQ.

CD

Example

If your child ate a bowl of Rice Krispies with milk and sugar at breakfast - tick ✓ Rice Krispies and milk in the column labelled 'Breakfast/before school'. The sugar that was added can be ticked in the diary (see Q6 on page 12).

To be ticked ✓ by parents/carers (or school staff if child goes to after-school club on the school premises or if breakfast is consumed outside the home).

To be ticked ✓ by school staff

To be ticked ✓ by parent/carer

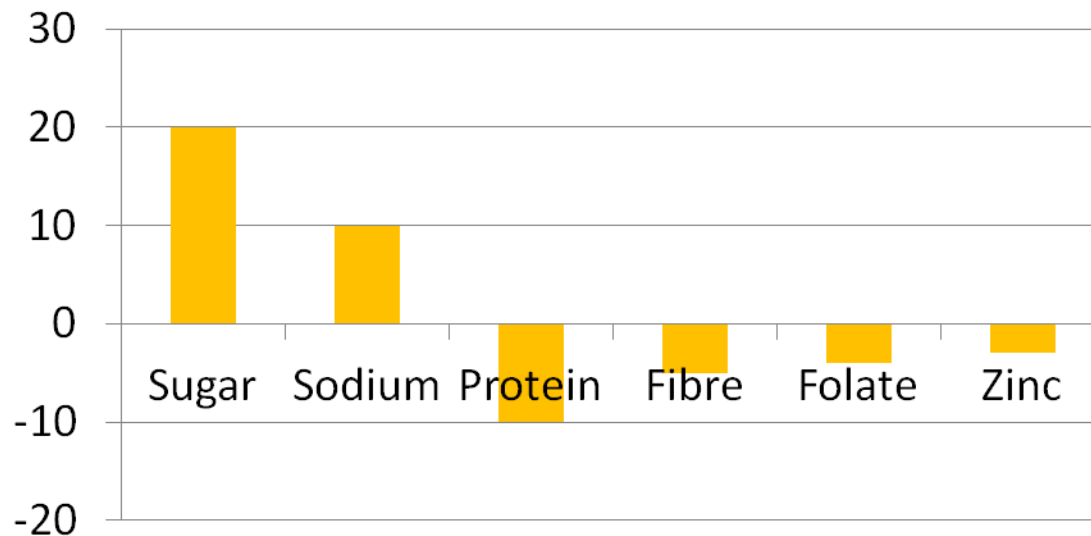
Example (do not complete this page)		Morning break (1)	Lunch time (2)	Afternoon break (3)	Before tea (after school) (4)	Evening meal/tea (5)	After tea/ during night (6)	Breakfast/ before school (7)
1	Cornflakes, Rice Krispies etc	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
2	Sugar coated e.g. Frosties, SugarPuffs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Hi-fibre e.g. Branflakes, Weetabix, Shreddies, Muesli	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Milk on Cereal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
5	Porridge, Ready Brek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

All sugar eaten is recorded in Q6 on page 12

Please look through the pages of this diary and then you are ready to start

Previous analysis of Project Tomato data and daily nutrient intake by school meal type revealed that children who had packed lunches had higher sugar and sodium intakes but lower protein, fibre and zinc (p values < 0.01).

**% difference over whole day for children having
a packed lunch**



Conference abstract
Reference: Evans &
Mandl, JECH 2012.

■ % difference packed lunch

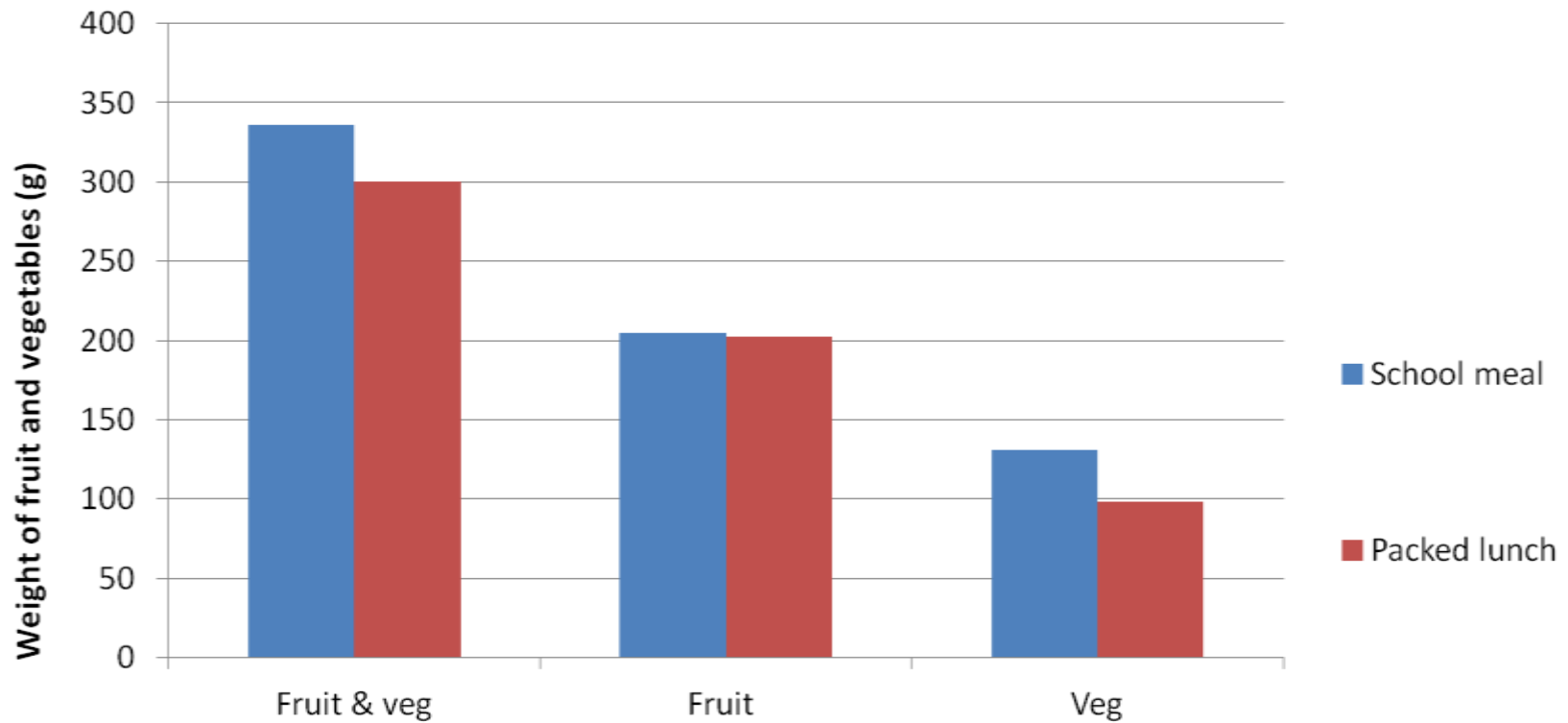


- Sugar and sodium over the whole day are consistently higher in children having packed lunches
- Differences in saturated fat appear to be improving
- Some nutrient intakes may also be lower for children having packed lunches such as fibre, folate and zinc.

School meal type and Fruit and vegetable consumption (children in year 2)



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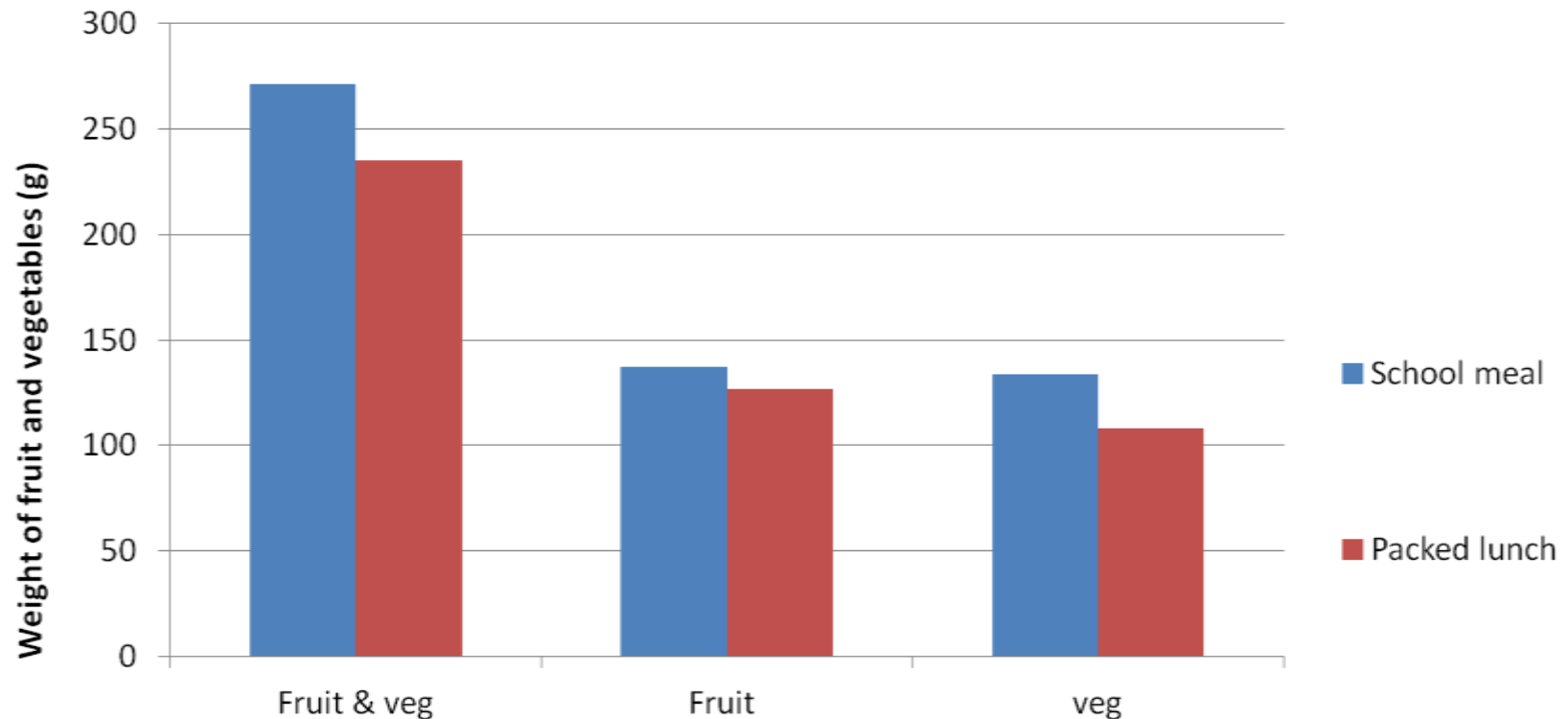
Difference between school meal and packed lunch

Fruit & veg $p < 0.01$, Fruit $p = 0.70$, Veg $p < 0.01$

School meal type and Fruit and vegetable consumption (children in year 3)



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Difference between school meal and packed lunch

Fruit & veg $p=0.01$, Fruit $p=0.31$, Veg $p<0.01$

Fruit and vegetable consumption & deprivation



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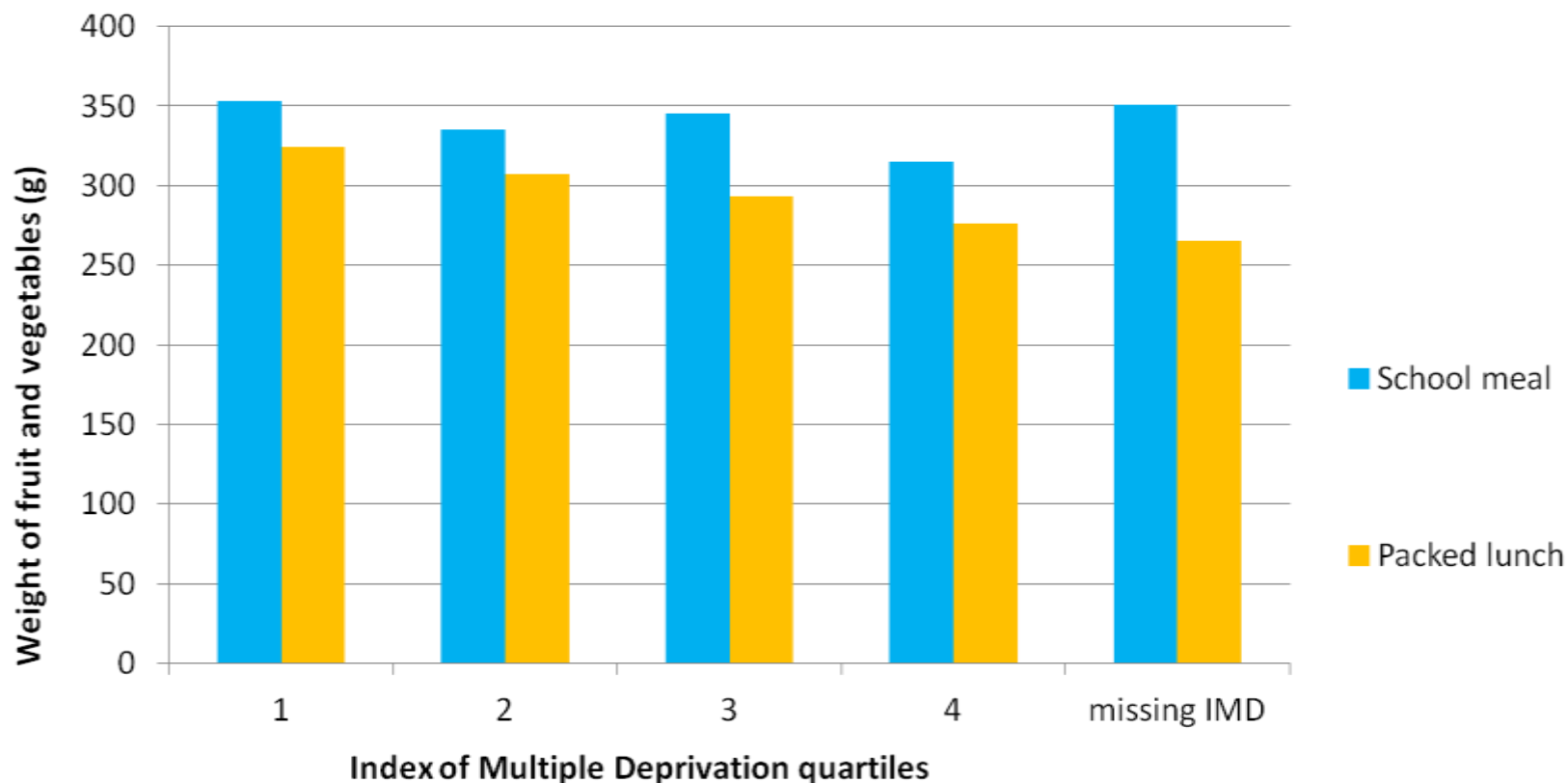
Deprivation was measured using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) split into four quartiles (1st quartile is the least deprived)

Food type	1 st quartile (n=576)	2 nd quartile (n=577)	3 rd quartile (n=573)	4 th quartile (n=568)	Missin g IMD (391)
Fruit & vegetables	334	324	314	299	253
Fruit	211	206	206	192	169
Vegetables	123	117	107	107	84

Difference in fruit and veg intake by school meal type and deprivation



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- Overall, children taking packed lunches have a less healthy diet which is generally higher in salt and sugars and lower in some micronutrients and vegetables
- Having free fruit did not eliminate this difference
- Findings are consistent with previous studies in terms of differences in sugar, salt and micronutrients (Evans et al 2010, Taylor et al 2012, Harrison et al 2011, Jefferson 2004)
- Regulations for packed lunches are needed in order to narrow the gap between them and school meals
- Continual reductions in salt by food companies is helpful
- Funding to reduce the cost of school meals and promote school meal uptake is needed
- Effective campaigns are needed to target children's diets outside the school environment.

References (continued)



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- HARRISON, F., et al, (2011) *Food and drink consumption at school lunchtime: the impact of lunch type and contribution to overall intake in British 9-10-year-old children*. Public Health Nutr.,1-8.
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- EVANS, C.E., et al., *Systematic review and meta-analysis of school-based interventions to improve daily fruit and vegetable intake in children aged 5 to 12 y*. Am J Clin Nutr, 2012. **96**(4): p. 889-901.

Thank you for listening



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Any Questions?

Please contact me on email if you want to ask anything after today:
c.e.l.evans@leeds.ac.uk

Thank you to colleagues in the
Nutritional Epidemiology Group:
Janet Cade
Meaghan Christian
Cristina Cleghorn



The Nutrition Recession.

Are school meals the
answer?

Siobhan O'Neill - Writer

[Welcome](#)[About](#)[Specialist Writing](#)[Journalism](#)[Digital & PR](#)[Clients](#)[Testimonials](#)[Contact Siobhan](#)

Hi. Welcome to the website of Siobhan O'Neill

I'm a freelance journalist and copywriter.

I specialise in writing about catering and its many associated issues. From the obesity crisis to child nutrition, school dinners and public sector catering, to health promotion and government legislation, by way of food service and contract catering.



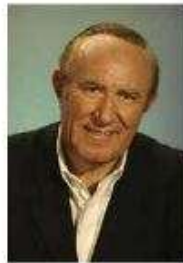
Lean machines

Does your employer offer you healthy eating choices? If not it should, says Siobhan O'Neill - a balanced diet could make you significantly more productive

ANDREW NEIL

In the political spotlight

School meals dramatically rose up the political agenda in 2005 thanks to Jamie Oliver, and have maintained that profile since. Television commentator Andrew Neil, the keynote speaker at LACA 2011 on July 7, tells Siobhan O'Neill why politics matter



COST SECTOR
catering

SHOP-EQUIP
www.shop-equip.com

0845 400 1048



HOME NEWS IN DEPTH PRODUCTS EDITOR'S BLOG RECIPES CSC AWARDS PS100 D

Home In depth Interviews Champion of local action

CHAMPION OF LOCAL ACTION



01/01/2012 00:00:00

Appalled by the quality of school food offered to her children, Stephanie Hayman took matters into her own hands and set up a social enterprise to run the meals service. She talks to Siobhan O'Neill about the business model, the challenges and the future

Bad taste

When was the last time you really enjoyed a meal from your staff canteen? Siobhan O'Neill asks why workers are losing their appetite for office catering

COST SECTOR
catering

SHOP-EQUIP
www.shop-equip.com

0845 400 1048



HOME NEWS IN DEPTH PRODUCTS EDITOR'S BLOG RECIPES CSC AWARDS PS100 DIA

Home In depth Research/Insight Tough talk for tough times

TOUGH TALK FOR TOUGH TIMES



14/03/2013 14:23:42

When Cost Sector Catering brought together the top 20 most influential names in public sector catering, they had plenty to say about catering budgets, food waste, training and health. Siobhan O'Neill reports

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The end of school dinners

Siobhan O'Neill

Published at 12:00AM, September 27 2008

Despite the promise of free meals, teenagers can't resist takeaways.





LACA

Governors

Unions

Teachers

Students

NHS

The School Food Trust

Nutritionists

Obesity experts

Parents

Manufacturers

Department of Education

GPs

Independent caterers

School cooks

MPs

Department of Health

“We want better,
tastier, healthier
school meals for our
kids.”

Healthy school meals increase

By [footprint](#) on July 17, 2012

Published in: [Foodservice News](#), [Health and Vitality](#), [News](#) and tagged [Children's](#), [Authorities Catering Association](#), [Michael Gove](#), [Nutritional Standards](#), [Rob F](#)

THE NUMBER of children having healthy school meals in England has risen for a fourth year running with an estimated 167,000 more children using their school dining rooms last year.

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Jamie Oliver's school dinners shown to have improved academic results

Absences down after chef changed junk food menu - a result which is a boost for celebrity as he struggles for US support

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Jamie Oliver's healthy school dinners continue to boost learning, study shows

Children who eat from Jamie Oliver's diet do better in tests and are sick less often

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17 July 2012 Last updated at 16:24

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School meal take-up in England on the rise, poll finds

Series: Breadline Britain

Breadline Britain



Britain in nutrition recession as food prices rise and incomes shrink

Families filling up on high-fat processed foods as 900,000 fewer in two years manage 'five-a-day' fruit and vegetables

Series: Breadline Britain

Breadline Britain



Families struggle to eat healthily amid rising food bills and shrinking budgets

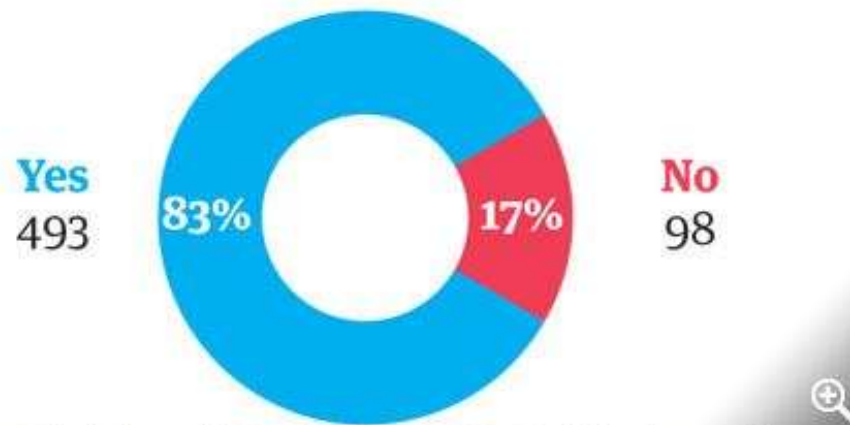
As more people are unable to afford food, experts are warning that Britain's nutritional recession is going to get worse

Breadline Britain: 83% of teachers see evidence of hungry children in their class

Almost 600 teachers speak out about how hungry children are in their classes. Here's what they said

- [Get the data](#)
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Do you see evidence of pupil hunger in the morning at your school?



Breadline Britain: the results from the Guardian's Teacher Network survey into children who attend school hungry

Obesity crisis to cost £45bn a year

Scientists' new report warns that around half of Britons will be seriously overweight by 2050

Parents can't end Britain's child obesity epidemic alone

Healthy eating starts at home, as children in France learn, but the state has a role in creating a positive food culture for kids

Reducing obesity and improving diet

Published: 25 March 2013

Topic: Public health

Ministers: Anna Soubry MP

Applies to: England (see policy for Scotland [↗](#), Wales [↗](#) and Northern Ireland [↗](#))

Issue

In England, most people are overweight or obese. This includes 61.3% of adults and 30% of children aged between 2 and 15. People who are overweight have a higher risk of getting type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. Excess weight can also make it more difficult for people to find and keep work, and it can affect self-esteem and mental health.

Health problems associated with being overweight or obese cost the NHS more than £5 billion every year.

By 2020, we want to see:

- a downward trend in the level of excess weight in adults
- a sustained downward trend in the level of excess weight in children

Actions

Helping people to make healthier choices

It is important that we encourage and help people to:

- eat and drink more healthily
- be more active



3,800,000

**CHILDREN IN THE UK ARE
GROWING UP IN SEVERE
INCOME POVERTY**

“You focus more on your belly hurting
than you do your learning if you haven’t
had breakfast.” – Jamie, age 9

**1 in 4 children
GET ONLY ONE HOT MEAL
A DAY - THEIR SCHOOL
LUNCH!**

- 3.9 million children live in income poverty in the UK
(defined as 60% below the average income)
- 1 in 4 children have one hot meal a day their school lunch,
according to research by Child Poverty Action Group
- 32% of schoolchildren regularly miss breakfast

Breakfasts for Blackpool primary school pupils

8 January 2013 Last updated at 20:09



Breakfast will be provided for all 12,000 primary school pupils in Blackpool, free of charge, after teachers said too many children came to school without having eaten.

The £700,000 three-month project, in one of the most disadvantaged areas of the country, is aimed at helping improve children's concentration and ability to learn.

It will be available to all regardless of family income and whether the children are eligible for free school meals.

Reeta Chakrabarti reports.

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Blackpool to give free breakfasts to all primary school pupils

Council leader says scheme is quickest way to raise educational standards while tackling problems of poor nutrition

magic breakfast
fuel for learning

IT COSTS JUST **22p** A
DAY TO PROVIDE A CHILD
WITH BREAKFAST

Every school day, we provide free, nutritious breakfast food (bagels, porridge, orange juice and cereals) to over 7,500 children in 230 primary schools. Why? Because in each one of those schools, many children arrive at school too hungry to learn.

'I used to be very sleepy, but since I've been coming to breakfast club I've been on the ball' - Patrice, Hackney

'We had a breakfast club during our SATs and it helped me get higher levels' - Rashye, Islington

New report finds poor children going hungry at school

- Despite the FSM scheme, many young people go hungry at schools. This is because:
 - Inadequate and complicated benefit rules mean that not enough young people are entitled to FSM
 - Only young people whose parents are on 'out of work' benefits get FSM, but children whose parents work in low paid or part time jobs are ineligible
 - 2.17 million school age children currently live below the poverty line but only 1.27 million are entitled to Free School Meals. 0.9 million poor students miss out
 - The price of school meals is an average £9.40 per week
 - The benefit system is changing, and the Government needs to make sure that when Universal Credit is introduced, all children in low income families can get FSMs.
 - Young people think that FSM should be made available to all low income families.

Thousands of children ineligible for free school meals but live in 'hidden poverty'

Children's Society study finds highest numbers of children living in poverty but ineligible for free meals are in UK's richest areas

Tens of thousands of children living below the poverty line in some of the wealthiest parts of England's home counties may be unable to afford a proper lunch but fail to qualify for free school meals, according to a study by the Children's Society.

The charity urged the government to extend free school meals eligibility to more low-earning families, who may be in full-time jobs but struggle to get by.



Fair and Square: Free school meals for all children in poverty

- More than half of all school-age children living in poverty aren't getting free school meals. These 1.2 million children may not be eating a single nutritious meal all day.



Department for Education

Free school meals eligibility criteria

The Department for Education aims to ensure that, as universal credit is introduced in 2013, the FSM eligibility criteria are fair, simple and easily integrated into the existing FSM administrative and delivery systems, and that the changes, as far as realistically possible, are cost neutral.

The Department for Education is currently considering proposals for new eligibility criteria and is working closely with Government departments, local authorities and other interested parties.

Updated: 11 December 2012

Independent National Database of Information on Catering Excellence in Schools

School meals may be reaching targets but they are not reaching children!

Background

School meals have an important role to play when it comes to our children's nutritional wellbeing. The 2000 National Dietary and Nutrition Survey revealed that school meals contribute between one quarter and one third of young people's daily energy, fat, dietary fibre, iron, calcium, vitamin C and folate intake. This contribution was higher if children received free school meals. School meals need to provide children with adequate nutrition to maximise health and minimise risks of obesity and other diet related diseases including high blood pressure, heart disease and type II diabetes. During term time more than 3 million school meals are served daily.

Levels of childhood obesity have increased over recent years due to a combination of increased energy intake and reduced physical activity. School meals along with physical education have the potential to be very important tools to improve the quality of children's health. Sir John Krebs¹ (Chairman of the Food Standards Agency) stated that if nothing is done to prevent and reduce the rising obesity levels then the life expectancy of the youth population will reduce.

Costessey schoolchildren learn to cook for their parents



The children learn to bake different foods each week.

These youngsters brought home the bacon yesterday by learning to cook for their parents.

Over the past four years hundreds of pupils have brought freshly baked treats home, thanks to the school's enthusiasm for cooking.

Headteacher Rosemary Kett said: "It is really important that the children have these experiences. It involves lots of skills such as maths when they are weighing the ingredients and reading the recipes."

She said that by getting the children to cook it also encouraged parents in the kitchen.

Café 1553 opens at Bromsgrove School

Bromsgrove School's coffee shop, Café 1553, is now open in our brand new Sports Centre on Worcester Road.

Why not be tempted by our freshly baked pastries, coffee and a fine selection of teas, frappes and cold drinks, along with paninis, sandwiches and cakes. Café 1553 is open to parents, Old Bromsgrovians and members of the Sports Centre on a daily basis including weekends.



COMMUNITY CAFÉ



Our community cafe is open to the public from 8:30am - 4:30pm (Monday - Friday). We offer a range of delicious meals, snacks and refreshments made to order on site. Please download our most recent menu below or pop in to see our specials.



WELCOME
TO THE ALL-NEW

McCain
4 Schools

MAKING YOUR CAFETERIA ^{THE} BETTER OPTION

With student-favorite
foods that build ADP!



**Great-tasting
Products that meet
nutrition guidelines.**

McCain® Reduced
Sodium Seasoned Fries



NUTRITIOUS OPTIONS FOR BREAKFAST, LUNCH + SNACKING

- Lower sodium
- Lower fat
- Bakeable
- 0g trans fat



“We’ve got whole families here. We’ve got very young children and we believe it’s really important to get them eating the right food from a very early age. If you get them into good habits you’ll help them long term.”

“It’s an area of high deprivation. We recognise that the meals and food they have here are very important and if we want to raise standards at this school we’ve got to tackle social issues or we won’t move forward.”

“We give every child a Christmas dinner for free. And any of the parents who come in. The day our Christmas dinner is served it is an experience not to be missed. They have it for free so that no child is in a position where that parent decided they would not have the school meal that day. It’s genuinely because we believe in the importance of that mealtime experience and sitting as a group.

Nothing is about profit making. We want to do it for as little as possible whilst still providing a quality meal.”

“For me it’s about how important is this to you? It’s about your moral purpose for young children.

Our catering team are providing the best meals they can for the children and we’re all realising that if the children eat healthy meals they’re more likely to do well at school and learn.”



Thank you.

The UK nutrition recession – are school meals the answer?

Siobhan O'Neill

Hello. Thank you for inviting me here today. I'm Siobhan. I'm a freelance journalist and I've been writing about catering and school meals ever since Jamie Oliver first made them news. Even if you haven't read my stuff, there's a fairly good chance I've Tweeted you about school meals, spoken animatedly with you about school meals, or interviewed you about school meals. It's fair to say that when it comes to the subject of school dinners, I am a bit of a catering geek.

It's hard to believe in a way that something that's so central to all of our lives now, has only been this media and political football for eight years. His Jamie's School Dinners series first went out in February 2005. Perhaps because this happened to be just a month after my first daughter was born, like so many other parents, the exposé really captured my attention. Right then I had no idea that it would turn out to become a core focus of my career.

Fast forward eight years and I for one am grateful that the upheaval and the investment and the hard work that followed Jamie's report, by so many different people, has brought such a massive change to the meals that my daughter now regularly enjoys.

So the story of how we got here from there has been complex and involved. Since I began writing about school meals I have spoken with MPs, and representatives of LACA, The Children's Food Trust (School Food Trust as was), school cooks, parents, students, independent caterers, unionists, GPs, obesity experts, NHS and Dept of Health representatives, nutritionists, teachers, governors, food manufacturers and the Department for Education. Probably a few more besides.

At several points in this short school meal journey, these different groups have not always seen eye to eye. Big changes imposed in a short space of time led to conflict between opposing groups pitching LACA against the School Food Trust, parents against schools, governors against caterers, teachers against the DoE, manufacturers against the government. It has not always been easy or friendly, and at various junctures members of these different groups have often spoken out quite passionately in favour of their own cause and against their perceived opponents.

As an outside observer with no particular agenda, these conflicts didn't always make sense to me, because no matter what was going on or how hard people were struggling with the changes or how dire they predicted the future to be, you know what they all said? Every single one?

They all said, we want better, tastier, healthier school meals for our kids.

And guess what? They did it! Even in spite of all the arguments and reluctance and grim predictions and protestations and heel dragging, they did it. In primary and secondary schools caterers serve meals that meet the fourteen nutritional standards and they are trying to be creative with their menus, and yes uptakes did drop for a bit but they have been steadily climbing for several years and that is undoubtedly something that all those different people I named can justly feel very proud of.

They did it. And mostly all those groups are now working together to continue to make improvements. And happily my daughter is one of millions reaping the rewards. And given the

weather we've been having recently I remain incredibly grateful for the knowledge that she is going out to play with a warm and healthy meal in her tummy.

But you know the nature of the world. Just when you think everything is hunky dorey, some new challenge comes up that makes everyone feel unsettled again. This current long-running recession of public sector cuts, parents with reduced incomes, rising food and energy prices, fears about the Universal Credit and a loss of ring-fenced funding has undoubtedly caused some new sleepless nights for those whose job it is to keep affordable meals rolling out of the schools serving hatches.

And this particular recession has brought with it a new issue affecting predominantly the worst off in UK society – it's been dubbed a nutrition recession. In November last year reports began to come out that even in spite of the massive drive by the government and the DoH under the Public Health Responsibility Deal to improve the nation's diets, almost a million fewer people were eating their five-a-day than they were two years ago.

Jamie Oliver's school dinner series and his subsequent work looking at the state of Britain's cooking skills revealed some troubling trends that many of us were already aware of. Children who couldn't name even basic vegetables. Who didn't know where milk or cheese or ham came from. Parents who let alone being unable to cook even basic dishes from scratch, were struggling to manage to microwave ready meals. Families with no table to sit at. Children unable to use cutlery.

These are the kids who are coming into schools and whom our teachers are seeing and educating every day. And now a lack of money is also being stirred into the mix. Yes poor diets of cheap, high calorie – sugar, salt, fat – ready meals, basics low cost meals and multipack offers are feeding the child obesity crisis. But worse than that, kids are going hungry. 83% of teachers have reported that they have seen children coming to school without breakfast or going hungry in the day.

Now some years ago when it was first mooted that cookery skills should be reintroduced into schools to begin to turn this trend that's affecting, what, three generations, of families being unskilled in cookery? I heard people say that it wasn't schools responsibility. Already hard-pressed teachers should not be the ones having to re-skill a nation in how to cook an egg.

And they're right. It should never have been allowed to get this bad. And they shouldn't be the ones who are having to pick the pieces up and try to make it better. But unfortunately we have to start somewhere, and with these things it's always better to start at the bottom and build up, so we start with the kids. We show them. We re-skill them. We teach them and hopefully what's been lost can slowly be replaced.

But in the meantime we have the more immediate problem. We have children whose diets are very poor and we have hungry children. Hungry children can't learn. They're tired, they're disruptive, they're moody – possibly aggressive. Children living off fat and sugar have massive energy peaks and troughs. They'll be bouncing off the walls one minute and falling asleep at their desks the next. And that's leaving aside the longer term health problems and cost implications.

In countries where education and hunger is a permanent issue, they use feeding programmes in schools to get the kids attending, learning and eating, and sadly it looks as though that's a pattern we're going to have to adopt in this country.

The easy one to tackle is hunger. You know, it's easy to judge. It's easy to sit in a position of relative comfort and think 'what kind of parent doesn't feed their kid breakfast? What kind of parent let's their kid go hungry?' And to sit back and do nothing. But we don't know individual circumstances. Maybe it's a mum working shifts and doing her best but occasionally something slips, or maybe it's because someone is ill or disabled and some things get overlooked. Undoubtedly no parent wants their child to be hungry. But in the end who cares why? Let's just do something about it.

Carmel McConnell of Magic Breakfast, a charity providing breakfast clubs in London schools with 50% free school meals says she's spoken to head teachers who say they have children in their schools with scurvy, children fainting from hunger, crying with tummy pains. Schools who struggle with morning classes because children lack energy, schools who've given up trying to do PE in the mornings because the last proper meal some children ate was yesterday's school dinner. Carmel estimates that in a school with 50% of children on free school meals, around 100 children will be hungry or malnourished.

You can't listen to stories like that and not think that providing a simple breakfast – Carmel's clubs typically offer porridge or a bagel – is an easy and essential solution. Cost implications are low, and rewards are high when it means that kids are satisfied and happy and ready to learn. Then schools improve and results climb.

And of course Mike's research has shown that breakfast clubs have a big impact on learning, attendance, concentration and results. And we know that people who eat breakfast are less likely to become obese.

Should schools have to do this? No. Of course not. In an ideal world schools would simply be a place where happy, healthy children cheerfully arrive every day and behave impeccably and learn to the best of their ability and trot home at the end of the day to the arms of their fabulous parents and their 1.4 siblings to enjoy a stable family life, plenty of food and a good sleep before eagerly returning the next day.

But sadly we don't live in an ideal world, and if some families can't provide, and schools won't provide, who else will? Currently 50% of teachers say they bring in food from home to feed the hungry children in their classes. That definitely shouldn't be happening.

Carmel and Magic Breakfast and the incredible and brave and inclusive and trail-blazing breakfast scheme in Blackpool have shown that it can work. Money and willingness can be found. And it does make a difference. A big difference in a very short space of time. And for Magic Breakfast it costs just 22p per breakfast. £3.50 to give a child a breakfast for a month.

For the teachers whose students can now concentrate and participate, who're more controlled and showing better results, there's no question it's worth it. And as a society, where hunger has been prevented for seven and a half thousand children in one city (thanks to Magic Breakfast), there really can't be any other response except acknowledgement that this was a good and right thing to do, can there?

But now the issue of whether school meals can provide a longer term solution to the problems of malnutrition and obesity is a more complex one. It is undoubtedly the case that for many children their free school meal is pretty much the only hot meal they receive each day. And with the

problems of families who have little understanding of nutrition, or means or skill to cook anything but the kinds of quick and easy supermarket meals which are lacking in many of the vitamins and minerals we would generally consider essential to a healthy diet, school meals have taken on a whole new meaning.

When Jamie Oliver began his quest to improve school meals, I think he probably just wanted something reasonably healthy served up to kids for their £2 per day. It's like, if you're going to make that kind of investment, let's at least ensure the return is reasonably good for you.

But in an age where we talk of a nutrition recession, suddenly those fourteen nutritional guidelines that were so fiercely battled over have an added significance. Now school meals are not just about nutritional value for money, they're potentially about ensuring the poorest children in society get the right energy and nutrients and salt and fat and sugar they need in at least one meal a day.

It's not always easy of course ensuring that the children who need it the most will get their free school meal. It requires someone on the school team to show dedication, empathy and tenacity. But there are financial rewards – via the pupil premium – for any school that makes the effort, and improved attainment and results for the school as well.

Universal Credit which begins any day now, is still a bit of an unknown as far as free school meals go. As late as December last year the government details remained vague about how the changes would affect free school meals, and even now beyond saying they are looking at it, they've yet to say how they will manage it. And believe me, I've asked people who should have some clue about it, and they seem unwilling to speak, or as in the dark as anyone else. It is worrying, but until we know more, there's not much we can do about it.

What we can do is work with children and families to ensure that the healthy school meals we're providing every day do the most good for those who need it the most. It's not good enough to just send reminders home to parents to register for free school meals. Schools need to be proactive or kids will slip through the cracks. And the ones most likely to do so will be the ones whose parents least want to engage with the school.

But there are ways to get crafty about it. Cooking lessons for older children is one way. It's been shown that when kids know how to cook one healthy meal they will take that skill home and transfer it to their family. They're showing their parents how to cook. Schools can then capitalise on this by running short community cooking courses. Particularly if it offers something struggling parents could really use. At the Children's Food Trust conference the other day someone talked about schools offering 'feed a family for £20 a week' courses.

There are many varied solutions to fit all the varied situations. Some schools I know have encouraged greater parental integration by opening a morning coffee shop or cafe where mums dropping kids off at school can then meet with other mums with smaller children to socialise. Some schools have even opened a Costa franchise on their grounds. It brings in revenue but also brings parents closer to the school. It gives the school a friendlier, less bureaucratic face.

Inviting the parents in to try the dinners is another way. But involve the kids. Parents are more likely to come if it's a special invitation from their child. Maybe the children would have the chance to run

the lunchtime like a restaurant, taking their parents' orders and serving them their food. And present the parents with the means to register for free school meals at the end.

Ensuring children on free school meals remain anonymous is another essential. It sounds basic but you'd be surprised by the number of stories I hear about free school meals kids being sat at a different table, or being singled out because of the way payments are made. Solutions don't have to be expensive. You don't need to install a biometric payment system to ensure no one knows who the free school meals kids are, but if children order lunch in the morning and are given a coloured band for the meal they request, not only do you minimise waste, but those on free school meals can happily integrate at lunchtime with all their friends.

We tend to focus on primary school children, but free – and nutritious – meals for teens and those new to secondary school and less able to fend for themselves are equally important. Lunchtime gates need to be closed so kids have no choice but to eat in school.

When the nutritional standards were introduced to secondary schools, boy was there ever a racket kicked up about how hard it would be to achieve. Caterers shook their heads and cried into their frozen chips about how no students would ever be persuaded to eat a sit down dinner that met all the criteria. And I bet the head of McCain nearly had a heart attack.

But look how clever they got and how far they've come. Look, it isn't perfect and we all know that some kids will only ever eat jacket potatoes or sandwiches, and that those students aren't getting the benefit of a proper nutritionally balanced meal every day, but by getting clever with different serveries and staggered sittings, and providing hot options at morning break it is possible to ensure large numbers of secondary kids do get to eat a hot meal every day. And clever branded options like pasta and rice pots with sauces that meet the standards, or veggie packed pizza slices, or hot wraps and paninis that also meet the standards are great ways to appeal to the teen mind set, to serve quick hot food, to offer grab and go options, and to compete with the high street. All of which ensure better uptakes, healthier students and improved learning outcomes. I'm not just saying it to toe the party line. I've genuinely spoken to and seen schools making it happen.

And finally I'd like to wrap this up with an example of a headteacher who believes passionately in using her school to ensure that her students get the best nutrition she can possibly give them. She's the headteacher of an academy, and I interviewed her last year, but she's asked me not to name her or her school for today.

So it's an all through school taking children in pre-school from three years right up to 16, and so in that way she has the ability to make the biggest difference for the longest period of time. The academy is located on the edge of a housing estate in a very built up area on the southern perimeter of a midlands city, and it is, in her own words a very deprived area. The children all come directly from the estate. They don't arrive by bus. She has 53% of students accessing a free school meal. And an overall 80% uptake of meals.

I'm going to read in her own words, the ethos she applies to food in the school and why she thinks it's important, and this is taken verbatim from the interview she gave me.

"What becomes a priority for you often depends on the nature of your school, so we do a lot of community work.

“There are a number of reasons why school meals are a big priority for us. One was because we’ve got whole families here. We’ve got very young children and we believe it’s really important to get them eating the right food from a very early age. If you get them into good habits you’ll help them long term.

“It’s an area of high deprivation. We recognise that the meals and food they have here are very important and if we want to raise standards at this school we’ve got to tackle social issues or we won’t move forward.

“The third reason is that going with that poverty we have quite a lot of obese parents. Obesity is an issue and potentially there is an issue there around our children. There are slightly more obese children in the school and we realised unless we deal with that it leads to bullying and name-calling which significantly impacts on them and their confidence levels.

“For us it’s about making food central to everything that we do, not just about the learning and what we teach in the food curriculum. If you genuinely believe that and you say that it’s important, then everything else has to follow from that. You have to make sure the food is healthy, you have to make sure that as many children as possible are accessing it, and you have to make sure that it is at the heart of what you do.

“If you walk into my school the first area you’ll see is the restaurant. It’s open plan. It is at the heart of the school. The area that children and families come to in the morning and sit and have breakfast and then disperse to learning, and it is the place where most of our children from six years of age up to 16 come at lunchtime and have their food.

“If parents are here for a meeting they can come in and have a meal if they want, and every morning when the parents drop the children off they come in and have breakfast with the children if they like, but then they can stay for tea and coffee afterwards which is free, and what it does is give them social time and it gives us a chance to speak with parents.

“If you believe that it’s important for the students to have a quality time and quality experience you have to think about how you manage lunch time so you don’t end up with people saying ‘I’m not having lunch because I have to queue too long or I’m not having lunch because I never get a chance to sit down and eat it. So all our tables have fresh flowers on each week. And all the children from a very young age use proper cutlery, glasses etc not plastic trays. It’s the whole experience.

“You can’t serve one and a half thousand meals in a half hour lunch because what ends up happening is a lot of children don’t have it. We have nearly two hours over our whole lunch period. It’s staggered because we want to make sure if that’s your half hour window, that you’ve got a seat to sit on for that half hour and you can eat your lunch in time. And that has played a significant role in increasing the number of children that have school meals.

“We cater in house and we make sure that the menus fit with our ethos and vision and meet our expectations of healthy meals, healthy food. We work to the nutritional standards but the standards are only a small part of it because if you work to those standards but 75% of your children bring in a packed lunch it’s not having any impact on the quality of healthy eating of the children within your school. I think that we should have standards and we work to them because they’re there for a

reason. Whether or not they make them compulsory for academies in the end it's about the moral purpose of individual organisations. And it is about how much health plays a part in that school.

"We make sure that the range of options fit the standards but within that the older children make their own choices. They're not going to get chips every day because we only serve them once a fortnight and the message we're giving is it's fine to have chips but you only have them on occasion.

"Our rate per meal that we charge is £1.60 and that is less than the local authority charge. We want to get more children so we're working on looking at variable rates for parents asking how much would it take to get more in? We've done a lot of research and found it's parents who are just above the free school meal line who may have three or four children in the school. That's £6.40 a day. If I can do a pack up for £3 that's saving me £3.40 a day, it's a lot of money. We are looking at a whole range of things to target them. Would they then have it if it cost £4 and £3 for a pack up - would they pay the extra pound? We couldn't do that if we'd gone with the local authority. Because we're open from 8 in the morning until late at night it's not just the hot meal at lunchtime, there's the breakfast club, it's after school snacks for children that stay for clubs and for parents.

"We give every child a Christmas dinner for free. And any of the parents who come in. The day our Christmas dinner is served it is an experience not to be missed. They make their own decorations for the tables, they have their own tables, they have their own quality time and we serve them and they have it for free so that no child is in a position where that parent decided they would not have the school meal that day. It's genuinely because we believe in the importance of that mealtime experience and sitting as a group. Nothing is about profit making. We want to do it for as little as possible whilst still providing a quality meal.

"We're in a location where one of the parents said to us we don't even have a table at home and I think everybody talks about deprived families not sitting down with the children round a table and I think they forget that sometimes the house isn't even big enough to have a table. And we all go off for the Christmas holidays and we all think that on Christmas Day, all families across the country will be sat round tables having dinners and actually we're wrong. Because in these families we question why do they eat burgers, why do they eat hand held food, why do they not know how to use a knife and fork, why do they not have quality family time? And firstly it's because they've hardly any money to buy the food and the second thing is the houses are overcrowded, they often don't have the space for a table and therefore there's nowhere to sit, so they choose food they can eat where there's lots of people running round.

"Children are only allowed to eat in the restaurant. It allows us to monitor what they're eating. Anybody who wants packed lunch has to eat it in the restaurant. Young children have toast in their classrooms. We allow that as a group activity. And there is fruit time in the mornings.

"In the restaurant there is free fruit at break time. We serve healthy biscuits that are made on site, and we give fruit for free. There are no cans at any time, it's all fruit juice based drinks or water.

"For me it's about how important is this to you? It's about your moral purpose for young children. Our catering team are providing the best meals they can for the children and we're all realising that if the children eat healthy meals they're more likely to do well at school and learn. It's also our teaching of food, opportunities for tasting food, recognising foodstuffs from a very young age so

we've got a lot of learning going on aside from what we're delivering in the restaurant and the two have to go hand in hand. If food lessons are separate, if you're teaching them about healthy food and they're eating badly then we're teaching double standards.

"In the end I think you should be considering how you increase the numbers of children that access school lunch not because you want to make more profit but because you want to make sure they're getting a healthy and well balanced meal and therefore you need to think about the eating experience and how you organise your school day."

Now, I'm not holding up that headteacher as a blueprint of how to make school food count in another school, because different schools face different issues that require different solutions. But I wanted to cite her words because she is someone who's realised that the food she serves in school goes beyond fuel for kids. It reaches out into the community and helps those who are time or cash poor. It has the potential to reach out into the future to help with long term health issues and their associated cost implications. And it helps bind her staff and her students, and it helps bind the school to the community and I think the value of that is probably incalculable. And she's absolutely committed to it, and she's put her money where her mouth is because even though it's an academy school and therefore to a certain extent is tied to a business model, she recognises there is a deeper value in ensuring as many of her children as possible receive a daily nutritious meal. For her it's a moral issue, and I guess my point is, that when it comes to hungry malnourished children and schools then surely it should be a moral issue for all of us?

Thank you very much.



Stigmatisation, discrimination and the administration of FSM

Sara Bryson & Stephen Crossley



‘Everything was fine until the dreaded lunch
bell sounded’

‘Look there’s Hope,
She’s got holes in her shoes,
Pays nothing for dinners,
And holds up the queue’s,
Going home with a face full of sorrow,
But don’t worry Hope,
We’ll get you tomorrow’

NORTH EAST

CHILD
POVERTY
COMMISSION

‘Schools cannot compensate for society’

‘Capitalist, neoliberal
societies beget capitalist neoliberal
educational systems’

Reay (2013)

Food Insecurity in wider society

Food banks opening

A 'nutrition recession'

Parents skipping meals

‘School was an engine of social grading, a place of humiliation for those without the possessions that guaranteed social acceptance’

‘(Children) in Britain talked about anger and the need to control it when faced by peers gloating over possessions and deliberately coaxing a response from those who could not afford them’

‘children identify free school meals as a very specific and visible difference, which clearly leads to fears of them being labelled and bullied’

Ridge (2002)

‘the greatest indignity is when one’s children are publicly displayed in the classroom or dining room as the children of a financial incompetent – one who cannot even earn enough to pay for their food.’



NORTH EAST

CHILD
POVERTY
COMMISSION





Do you know who is
poor in your school?



Areas to address

- The Administration of Free School Meals
- Quality & Portion Size
- What can you get for £1.90? What can't you get?

Areas to address

- Breakfast
- Pre-Exams
- Black Market
- Knowledge, understanding and awareness of teaching staff

Conclusions

Universal Free School Meals?

Universal Breakfast provision?

Exploring practice across the
school day

Acknowledgements

Four schools involved (children, parents, staff & governors)



References

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Available at: <http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol19/iss1/6>

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Veit-Wilson, J. (1971) *The right to Privacy and the Collection of School Dinner Money*, Newcastle: Confederation for the Advancement of State Education



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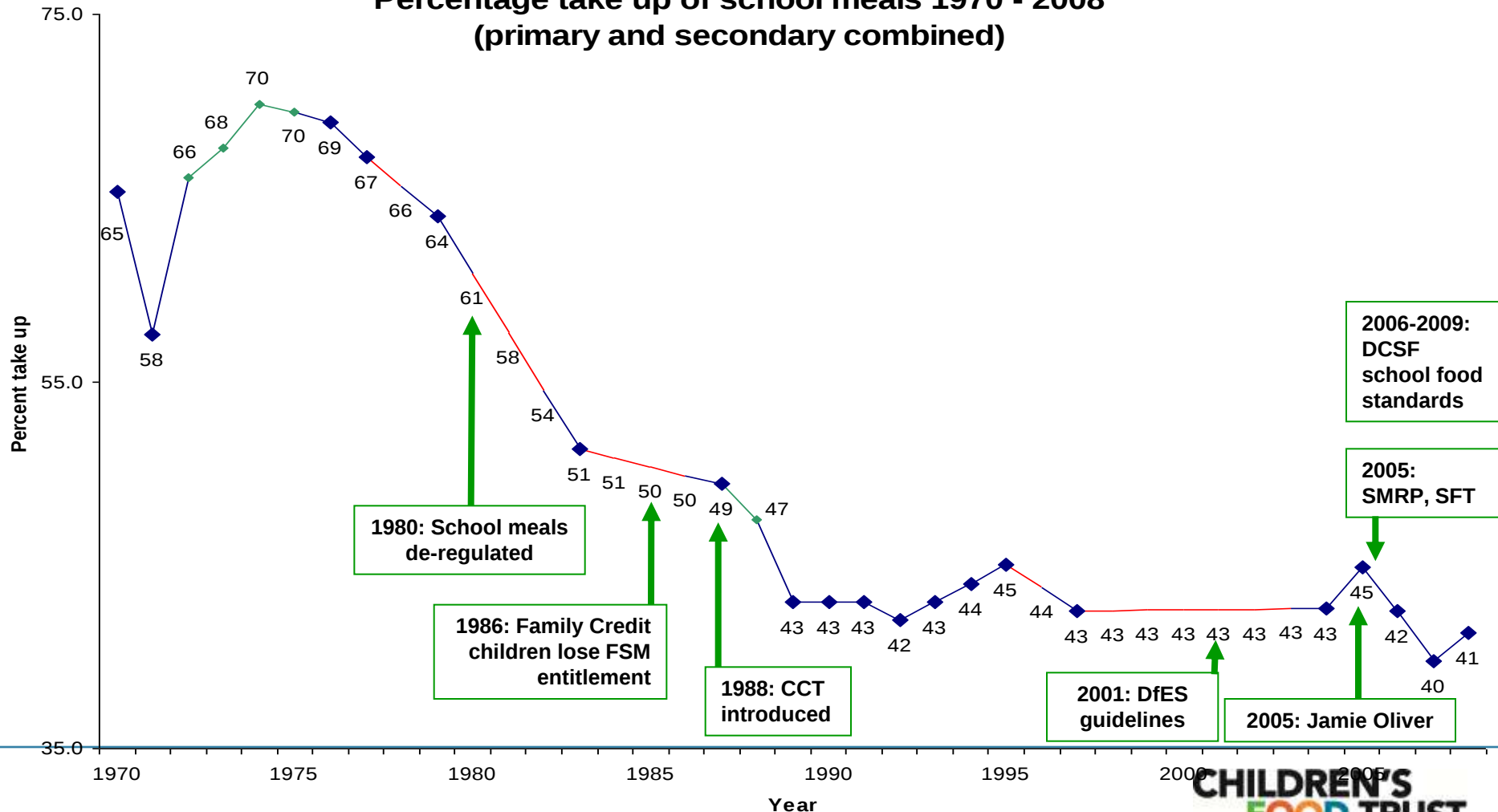
The impact of school food standards on diet, behaviour and growth



Dr Michael Nelson
Director of Research and Nutrition

Food in schools has declined in both quantity and quality

Percentage take up of school meals 1970 - 2008
(primary and secondary combined)



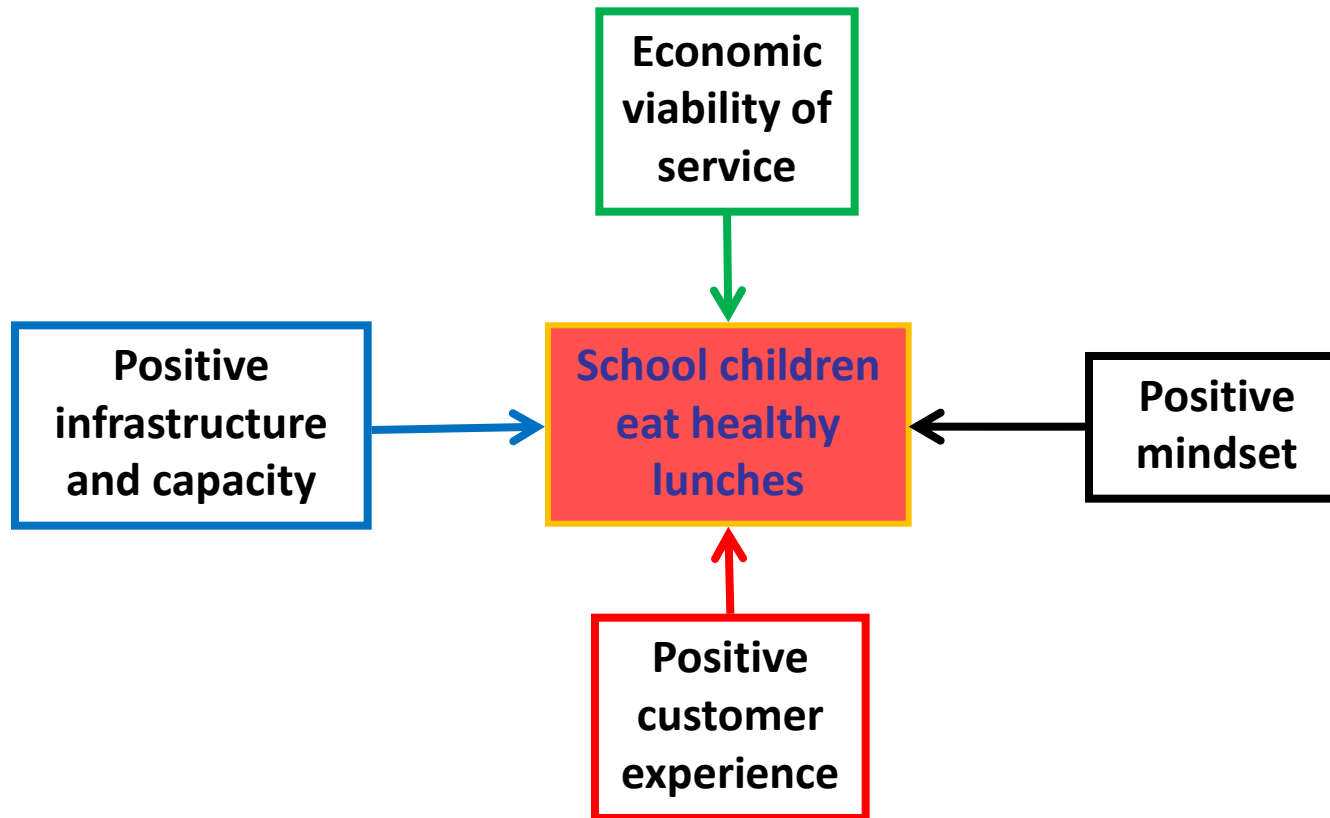
Slide 2

Imputed values

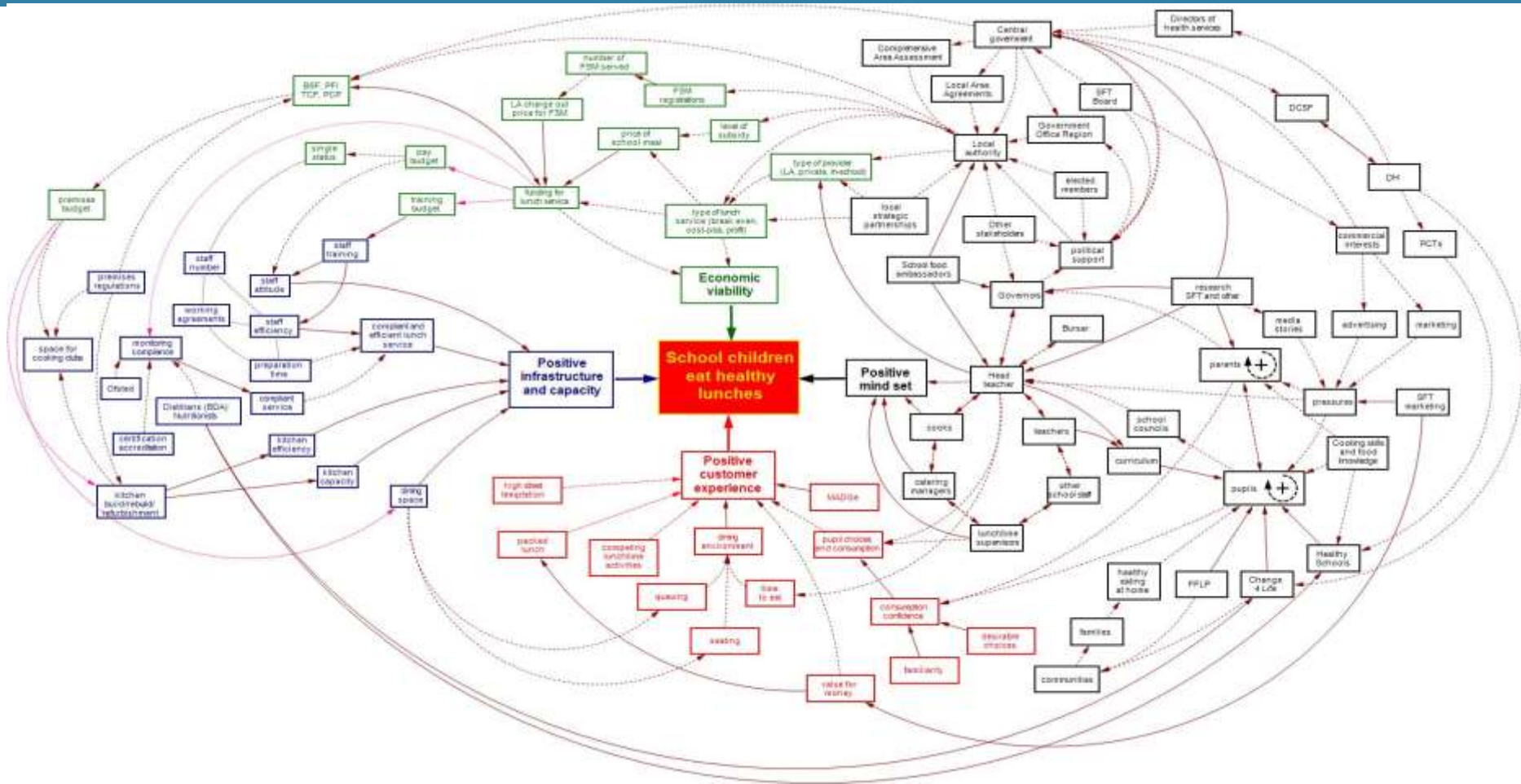
**CHILDREN'S
FOOD TRUST**
Eat Better Do Better

Pupil choice is not the only issue

Factors affecting healthy eating at lunchtime

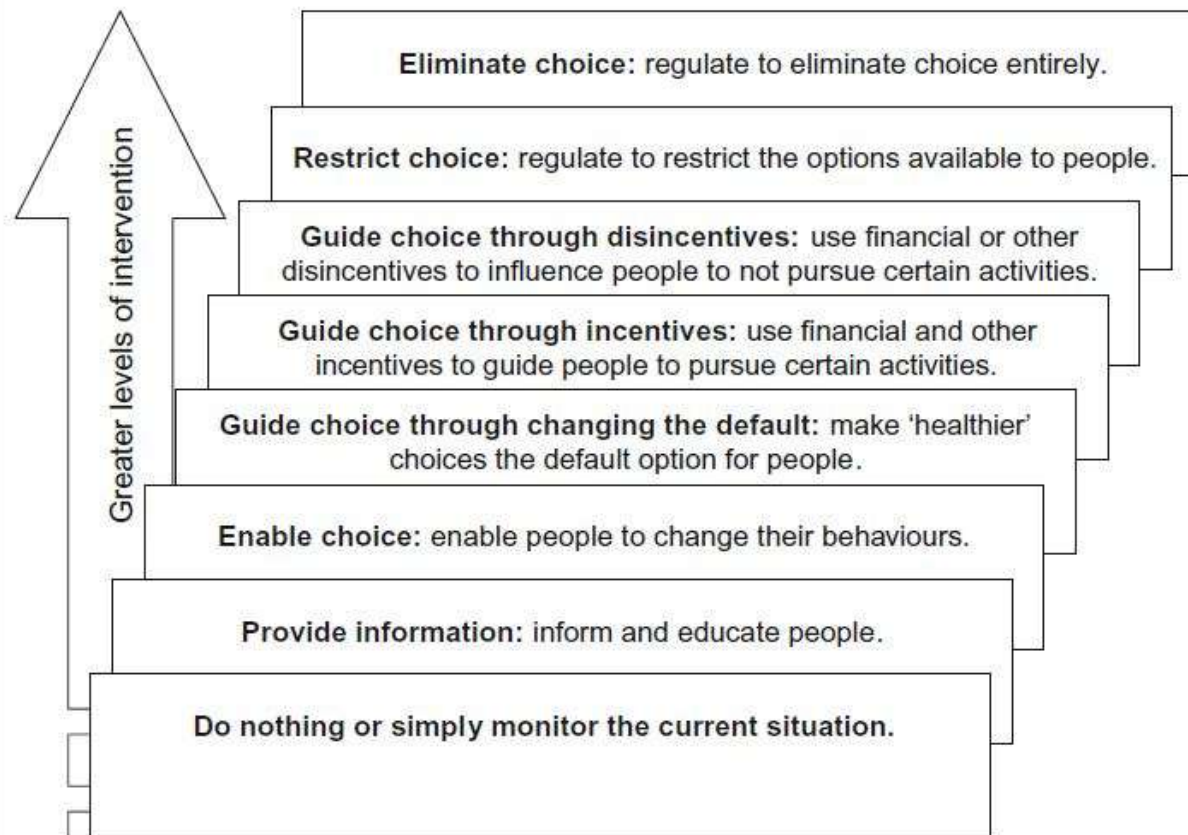


Food in schools – systems map



Nuffield ladder of interventions

Figure 2.1: A ladder of interventions



The Government says it will “aim to use the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect”.

(Source: DH, 2010)

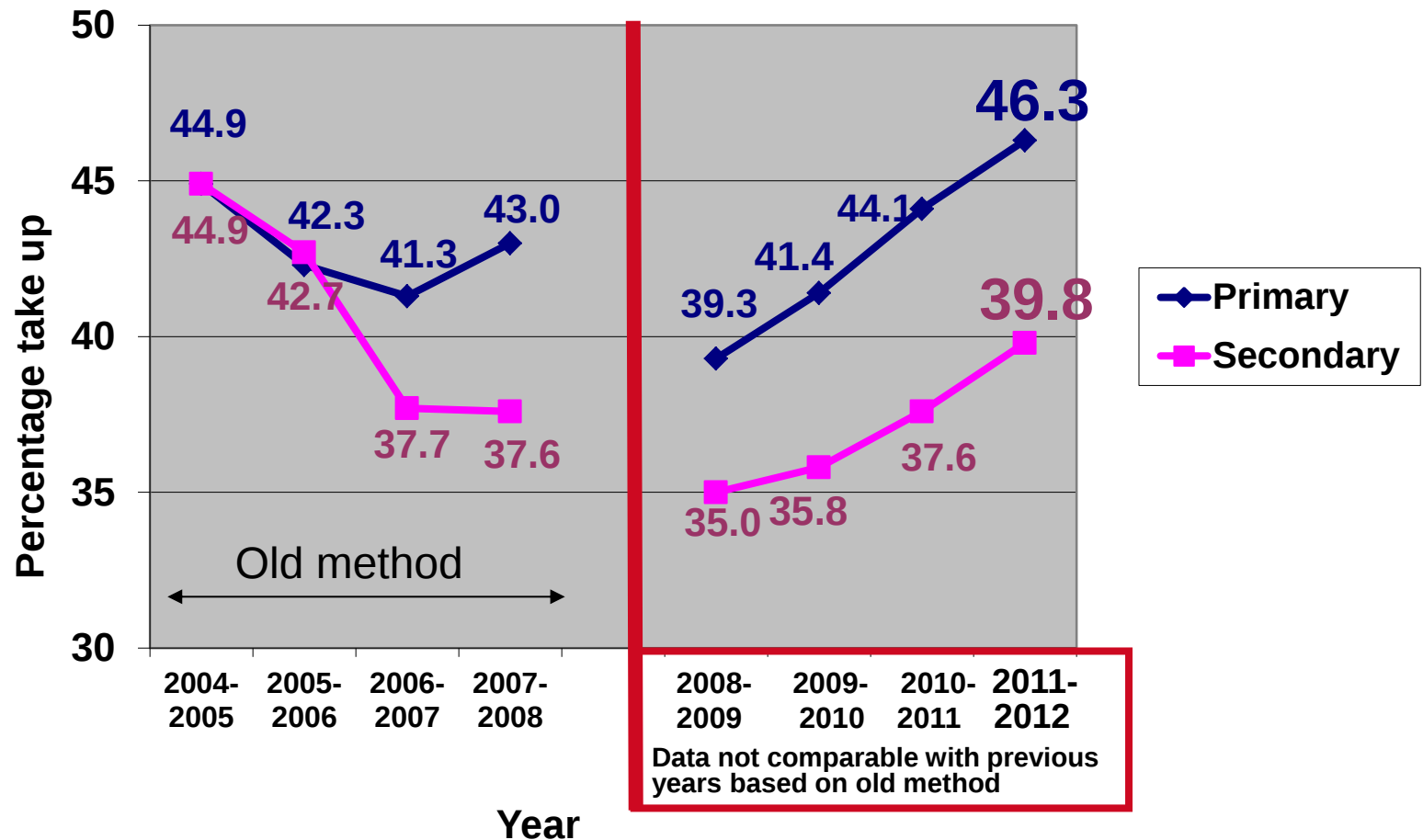
Nuffield ladder of interventions, Government intervention, and the work of the Children's Food Trust

Level		Actions
Greater levels of intervention	Eliminate choice: regulate to eliminate choice entirely	No soft drinks, savoury snacks or confectionery served in schools
	Restrict Choice: regulate to restrict the options available to people	- Limit appearances of deep-fried foods and meat products on menu - Limit vending options to healthier snacks, drinks, and foods low in fat, sugar and salt
	Guide choice through disincentives: use financial or other disincentives to influence people to not pursue certain activities	Make less healthy options more expensive
	Guide choice through incentives: use financial and other incentives to guide people to pursue certain activities	- Make healthier options cheaper - Use cashless systems to speed service - Promote "Meal Deals" to encourage school lunch take up - Use healthier school lunches to link to sustainability and charitable issues (e.g. fundraise with World Food Program) - Provide Government financial support - Promote and pilot free school meals - Promote kitchen and dining room efficiencies - Promote efficient procurement through common frameworks - Make inspections of service easier, transparent, and amenable to assess by e.g. Ofsted, Trading Standards
	Guide choice through changing the default: make 'healthier' choices the default option for people	- Increase the availability of fruit and vegetables at every food outlet - Increase nutrient density (e.g. dietary fibre using whole grain cereals) - Arrange serving hatches and food presentation to promote healthier options
	Enable choice: enable people to change their behaviours	- Use "taster sessions" to make new foods on menus familiar - Train cooks to cook healthier food - Provide menu and marketing templates to caterers to promote healthier options to children in schools - Set up sustainable "Let's Get Cooking" clubs in over 5000 schools in England to teach healthy cooking to children and their families - Influence building regulations relating to kitchens and dining rooms for new schools and academies; set minimum standards for existing schools
	Provide information: inform and educate people	- Inform parents about changes to school food - Promote menus to pupils and parents - Learn about stakeholder needs and issues and share learning across stakeholder groups - Provide resources and curriculum packs for school teachers
	Do nothing or simply monitor the current situation	Watch school lunch service and food quality deteriorate over time!

The impact of the standards...

... on take up and compliance

Take up of school lunches 2004-2012

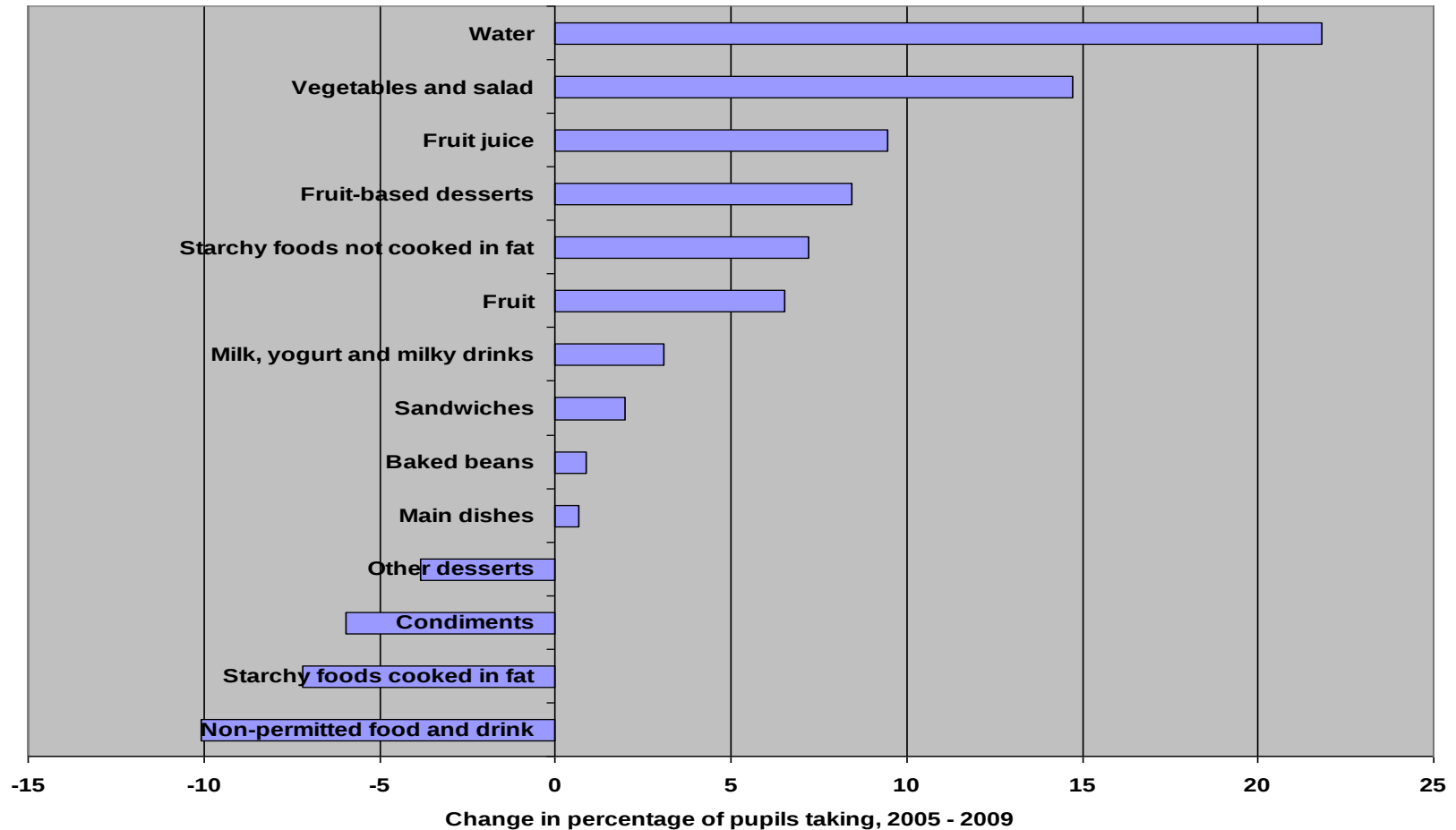


The impact of the standards...

... on diet

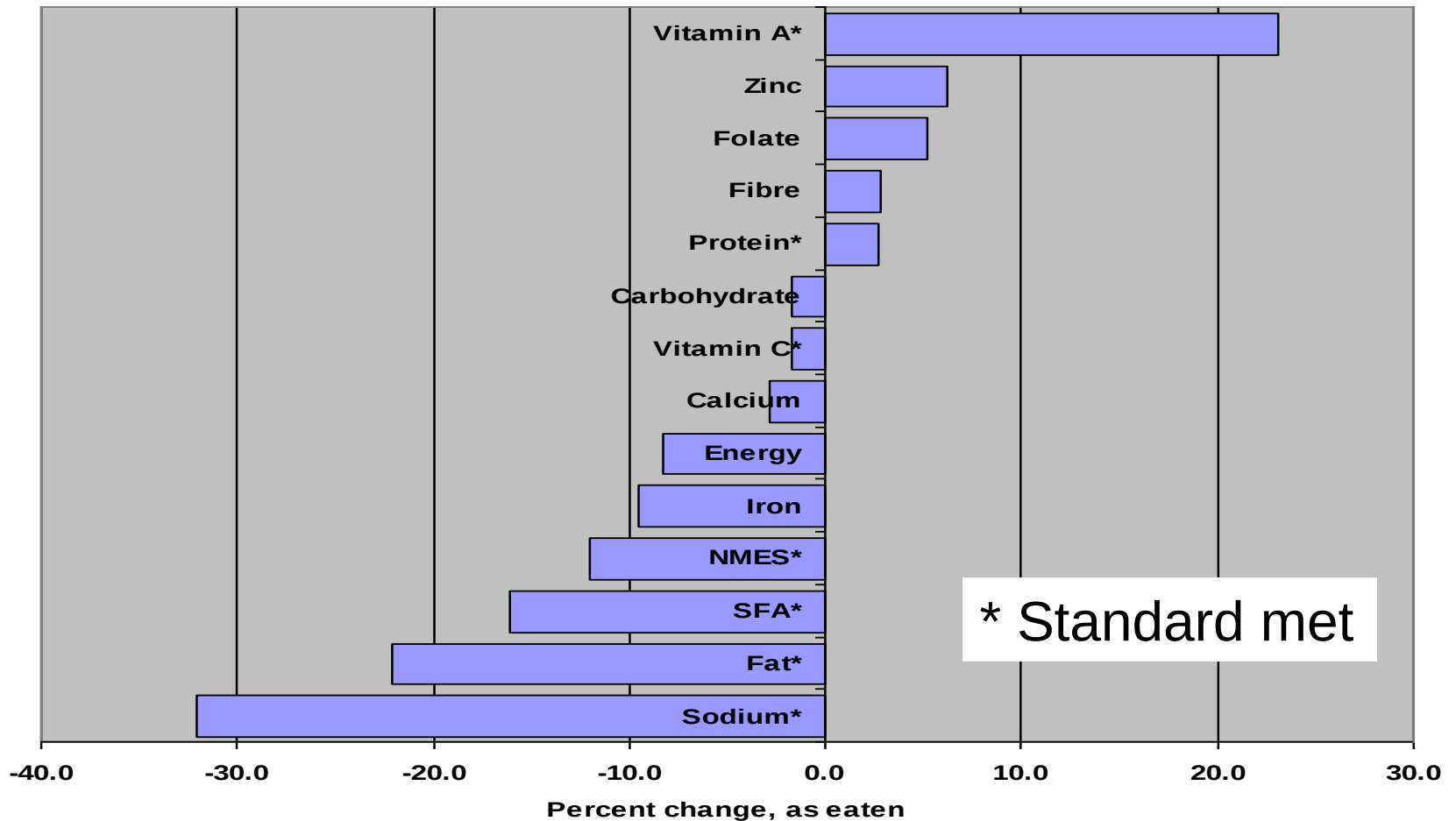
Primary School Food Survey

Change in percentage of pupils taking, 2005-2009



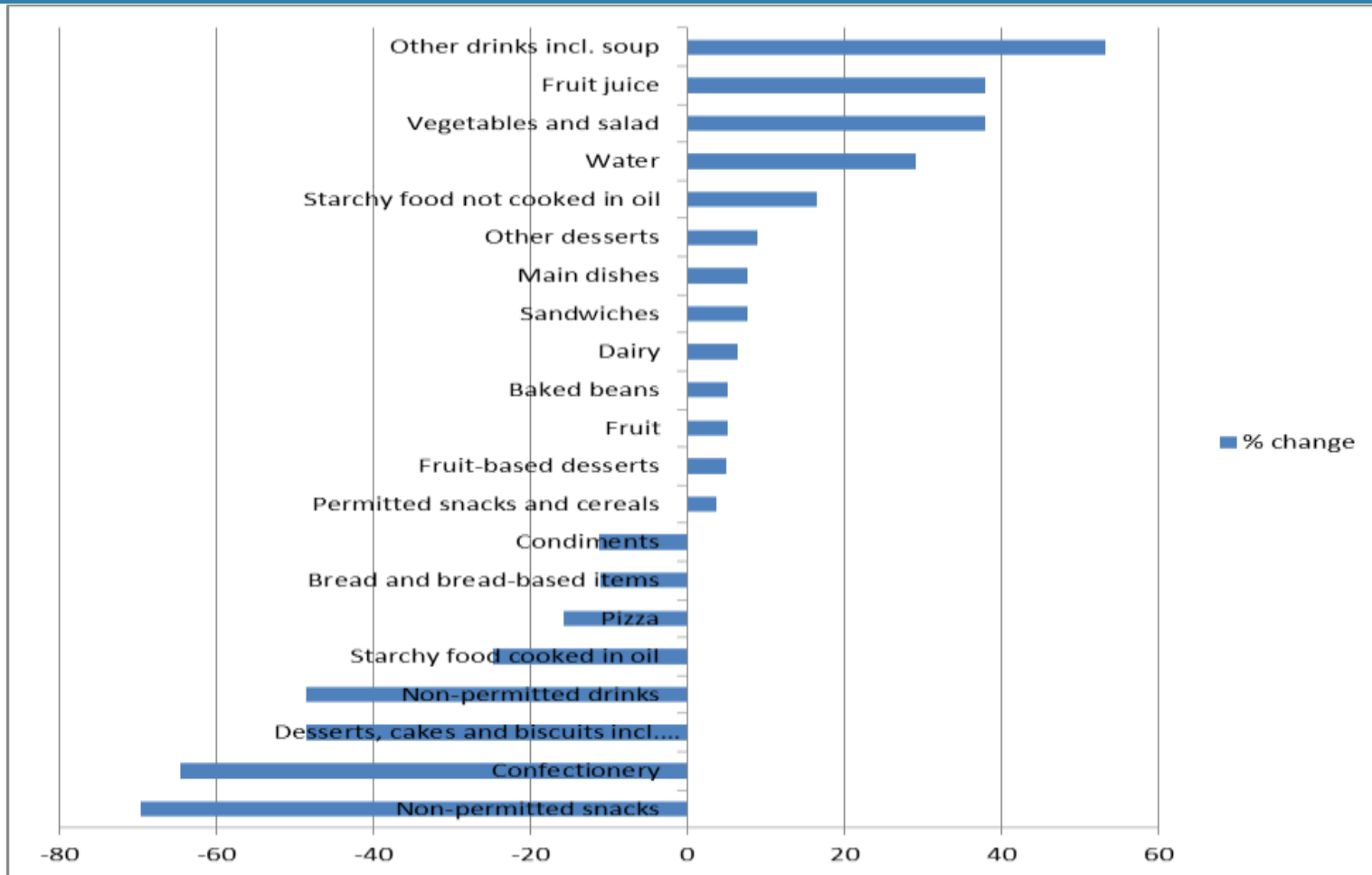
Primary School Food Survey

Average percent change, nutrients, as eaten, 2005-2009



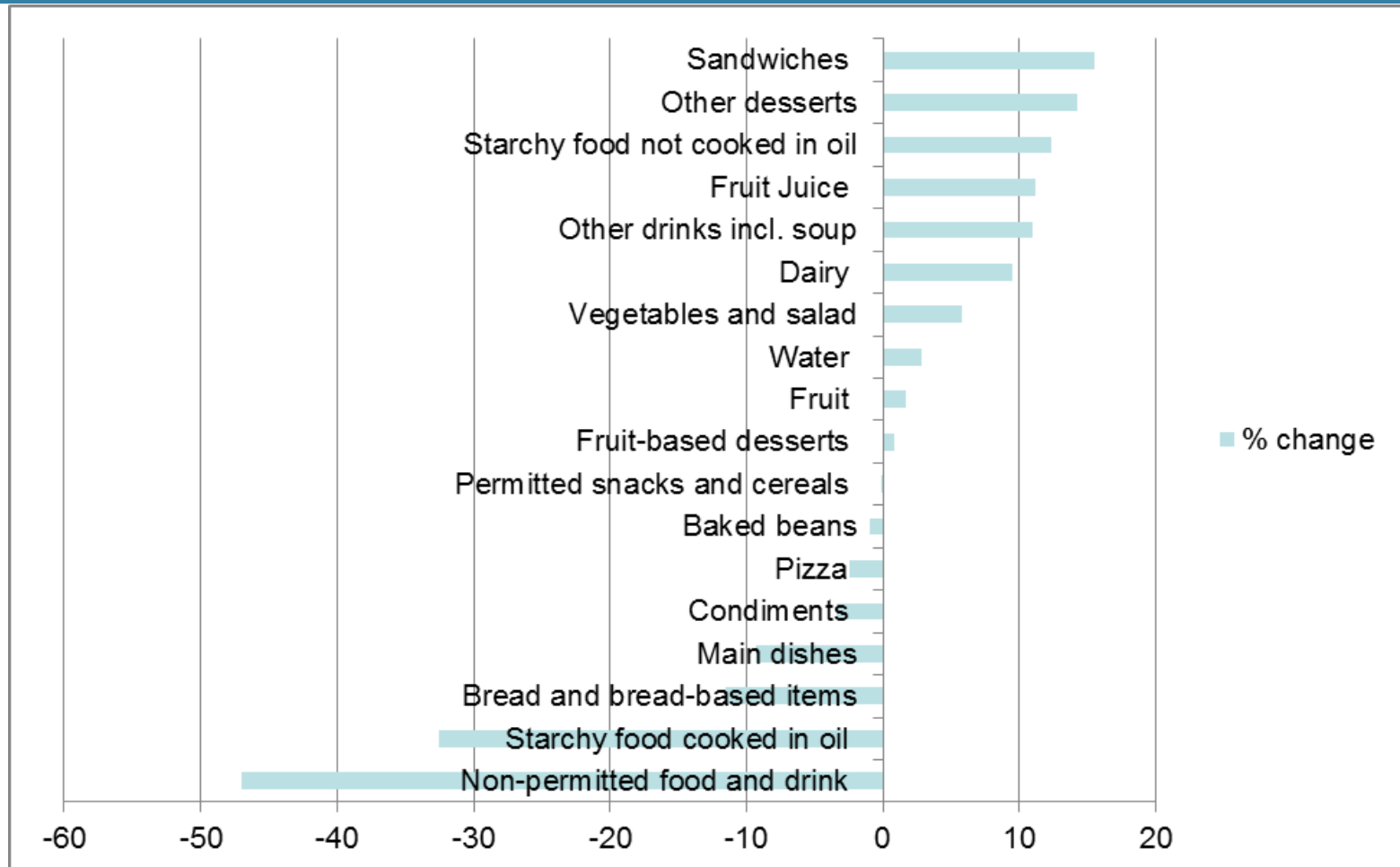
Secondary School Food Survey, England

Change in percentage of schools providing 4-5 days per week at lunchtime, by food group, 2004-2011



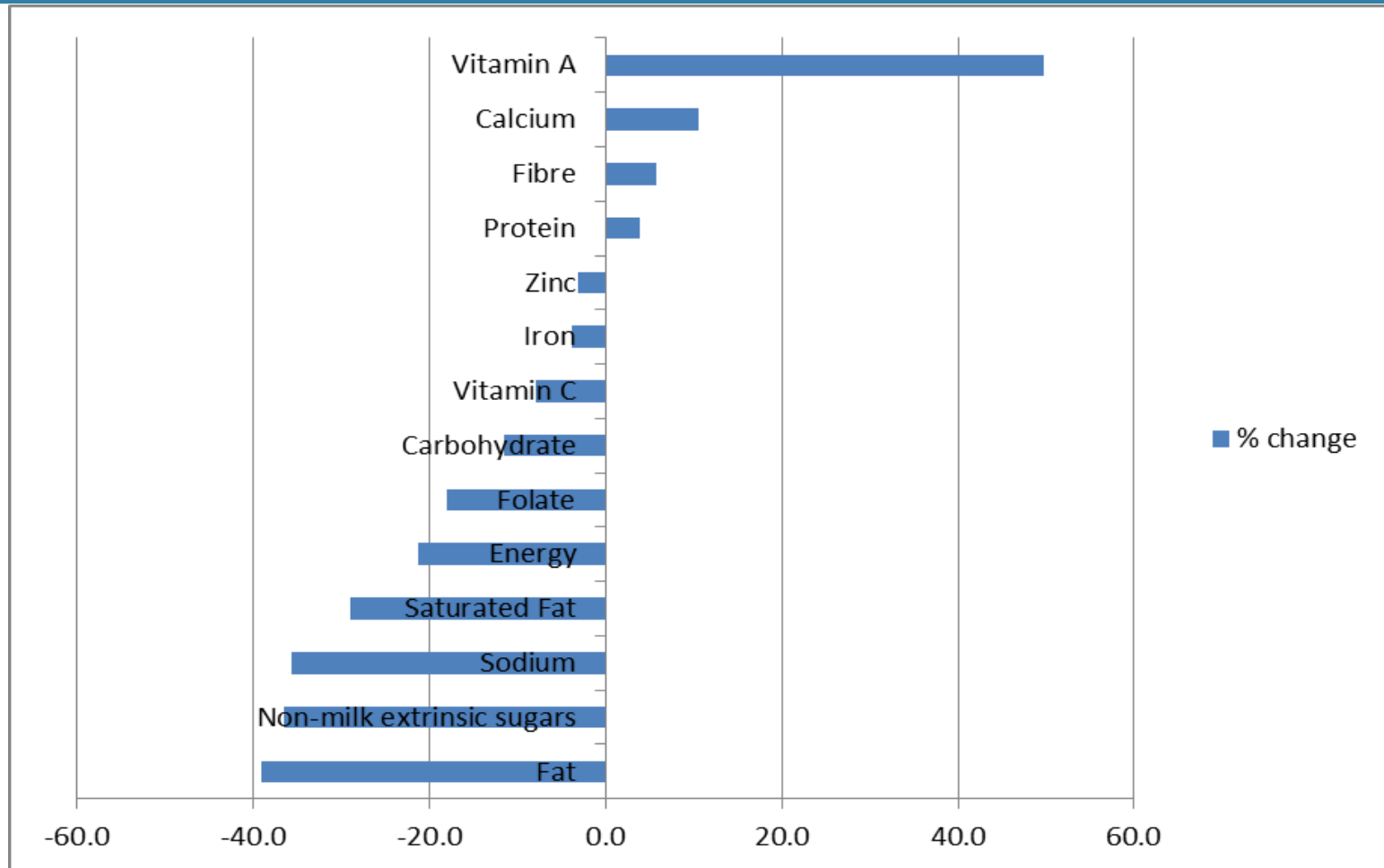
Secondary School Food Survey, England

Change in percentage of pupils taking at lunchtime, by food group, 2004-2011



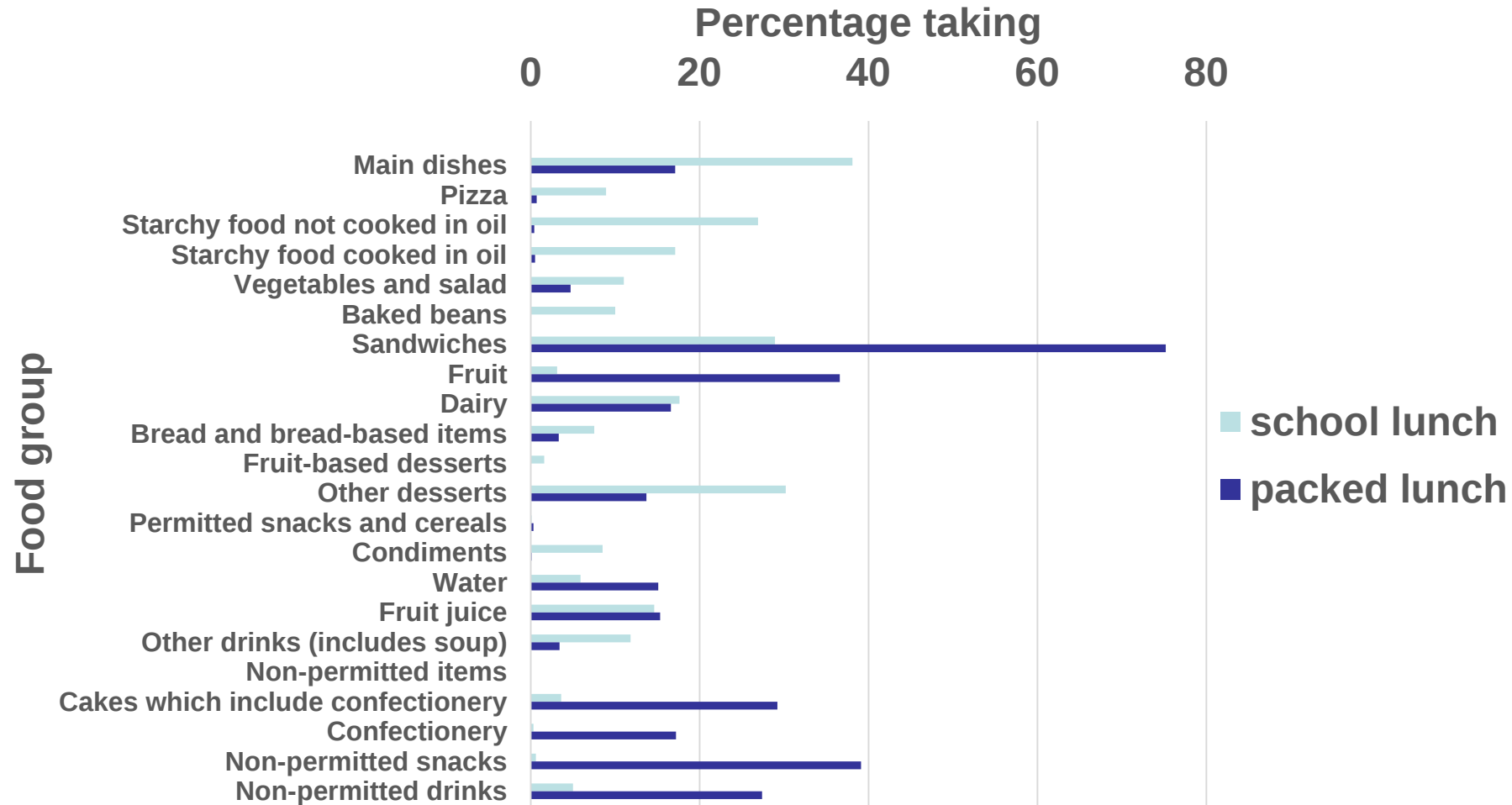
Secondary School Food Survey, England

Percentage mean difference in the energy and nutrient content of school lunch as eaten, 2004-2011



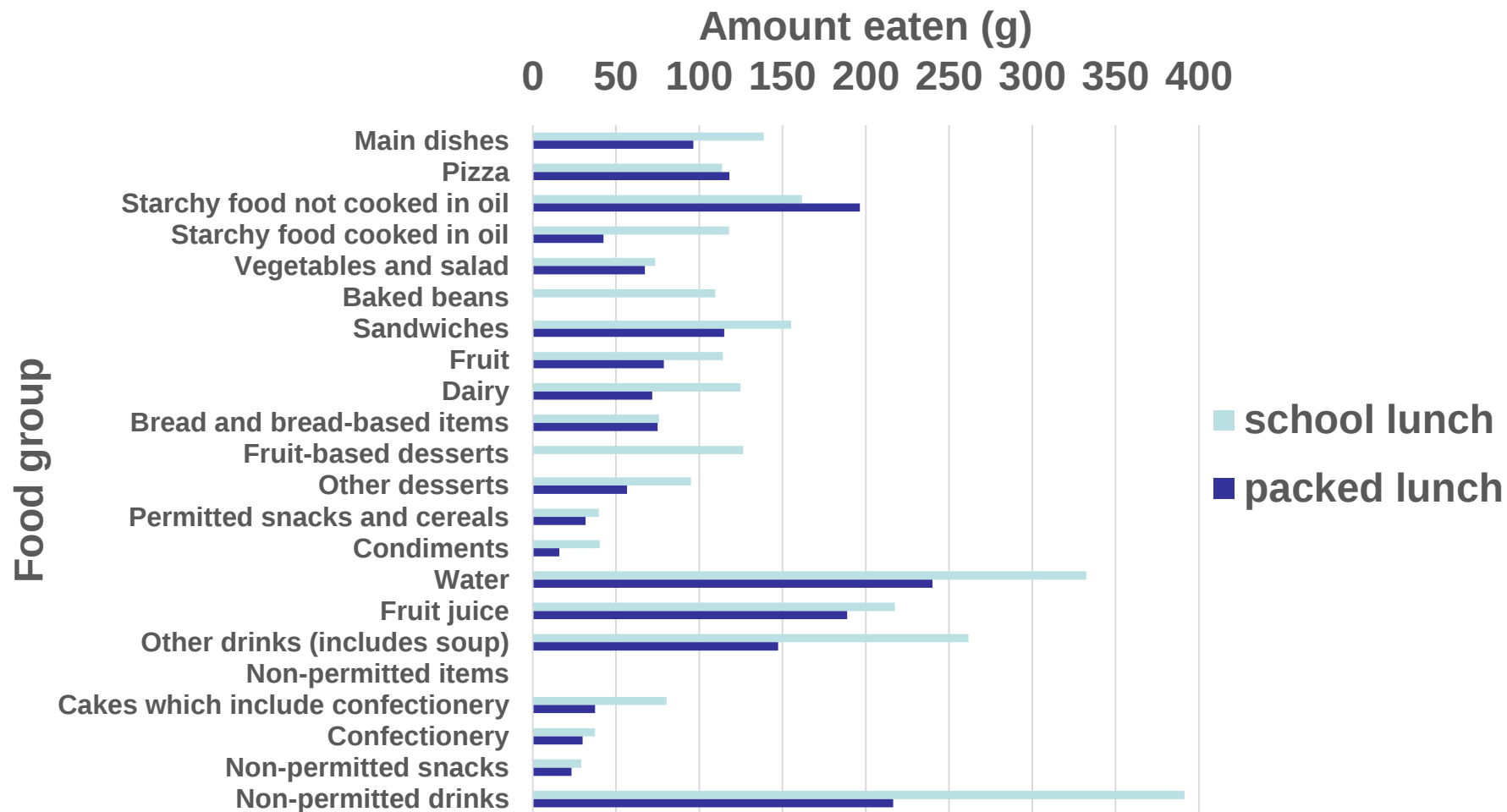
Secondary School Food Survey, England

Percentage of pupils taking food at school or bringing in packed lunch, 2011



Secondary School Food Survey, England

Portion size eaten, “consumers”, school lunch or packed lunch, g/meal, 2011



The impact of the standards...

... on behaviour

Two studies

Primary and secondary

- Randomised controlled interventions
 - *12-15 weeks*
 - *Food and dining environment*
 - *136 pupils, five consecutive days*
- Systematic observations
 - *observers trained in standardised technique*
 - *Pupils' learning behaviour: "on-task" or "off-task"*
 - *Setting: Pupil works alone, with others, or with teacher*
 - *In classroom immediately after lunch (60-90 minutes)*
 - *baseline and follow up*

Primary schools

Results – On-task and off-task behaviour

Behaviour	Odds Ratio*	Confidence Interval	P value
On-task, all settings	1.14	0.87, 1.49	1.15
• Individual On-task	1.34	0.74, 1.83	0.27
• Teacher-pupil On task	3.40	1.56, 7.36	0.009
• Pupil-pupil On-task	0.45	0.28, 0.70	<0.001
Off-task, all settings	0.83	0.74, 1.19	0.31
• Individual off task	0.71	0.37, 1.35	0.29
• Teacher-pupil off task	1.09	0.35, 3.45	0.89
• Pupil-pupil off task	2.28	1.25, 4.17	0.007

*Statistical analysis adjusted for class size (<22 vs. 22 or more), presence of additional adults in the classroom, English as an additional language (EAL), sex, FSM eligibility, SEN status, ethnicity and lunch type (school meal or packed lunch)

Secondary schools

Results – On-task and off-task behaviours

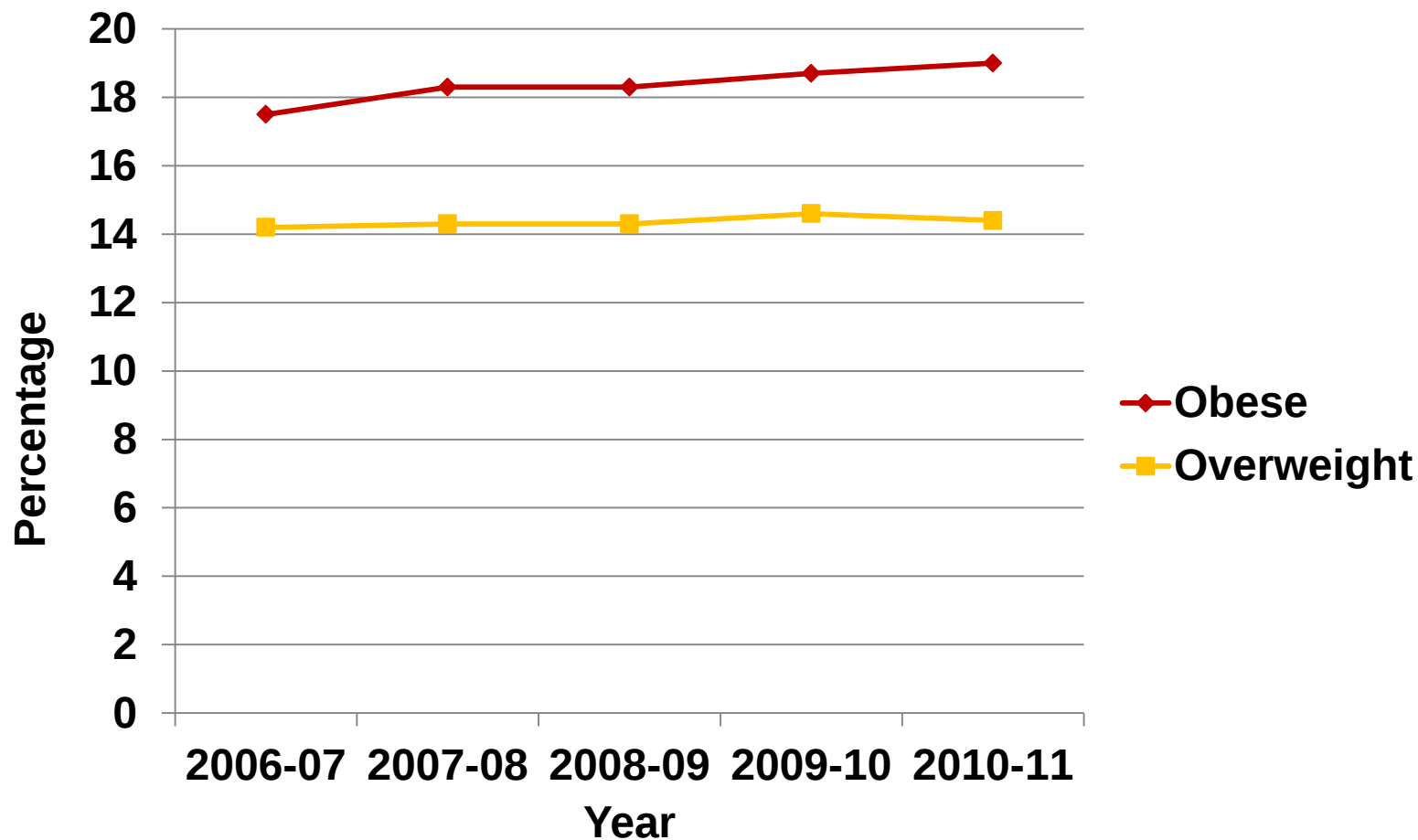
Behaviour	Odds Ratio*	Confidence interval		P
On-task, all settings	1.18	1.05	1.33	0.005
• <i>Individual on-task</i>	1.24	0.97	1.58	0.088
• <i>Teacher-pupil on-task</i>	0.82	0.64	1.04	0.103
• <i>Pupil-pupil on-task</i>	1.04	0.86	1.25	0.716
Off-task, all settings	0.86	0.75	0.98	0.021
• <i>Individual off-task</i>	0.88	0.68	1.14	0.321
• <i>Pupil-pupil off-task</i>	0.87	0.71	1.06	0.171
• <i>Teacher-pupil off-task</i>	1.03	0.78	1.36	0.82

*Statistical analysis adjusted for class size (<22 vs. 22 or more), presence of additional adults in the classroom, English as an additional language (EAL), sex, FSM eligibility, SEN status, ethnicity and lunch type (school meal or packed lunch)

The impact of the standards...

... on growth

Overweight and obesity, Year 6, England, 2006-2011 (NCMP)



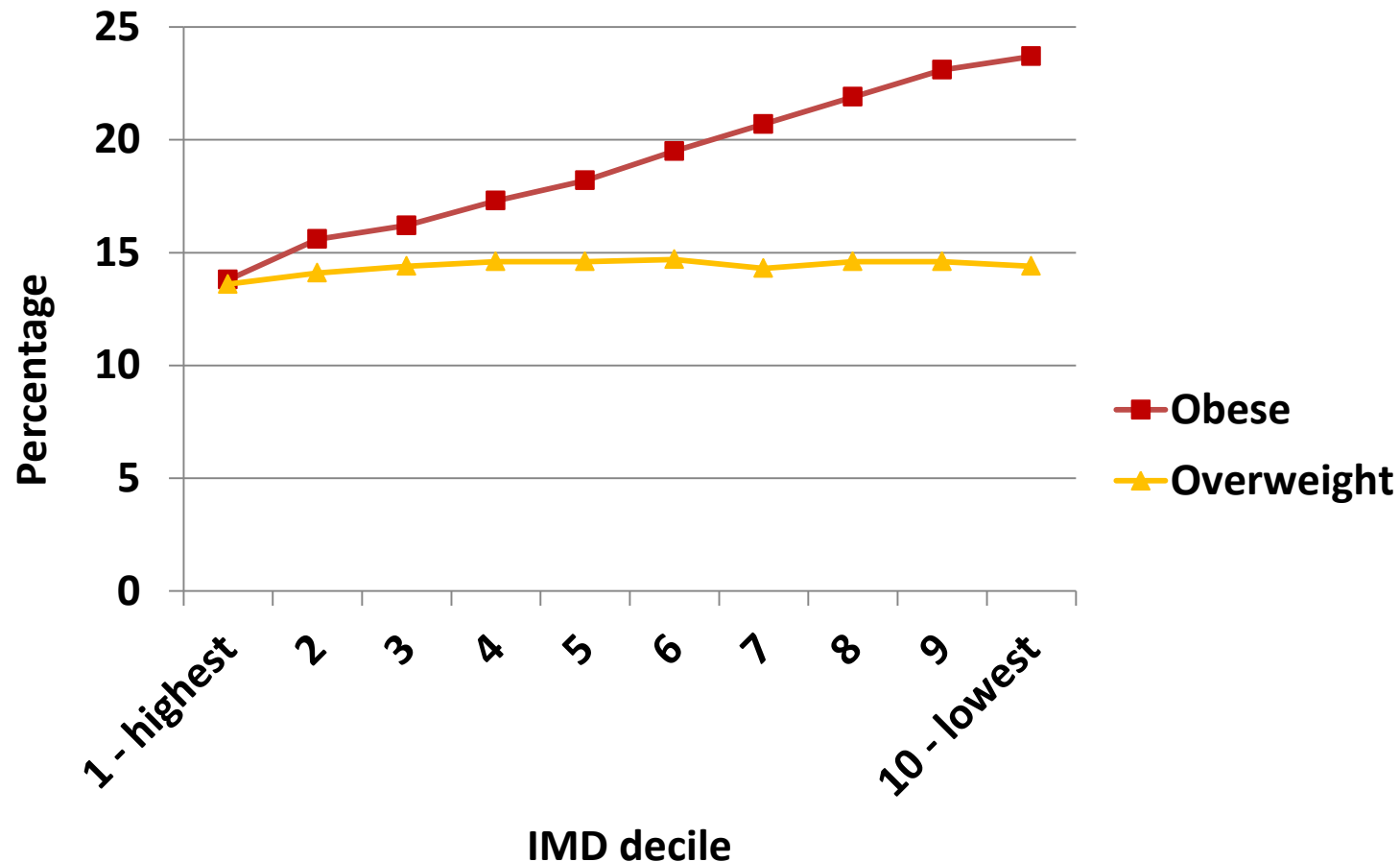
Energy intake from school lunches and packed lunches, as eaten (kcal)

Year	School lunch	Packed lunch
2005	427	-
2009	395	450

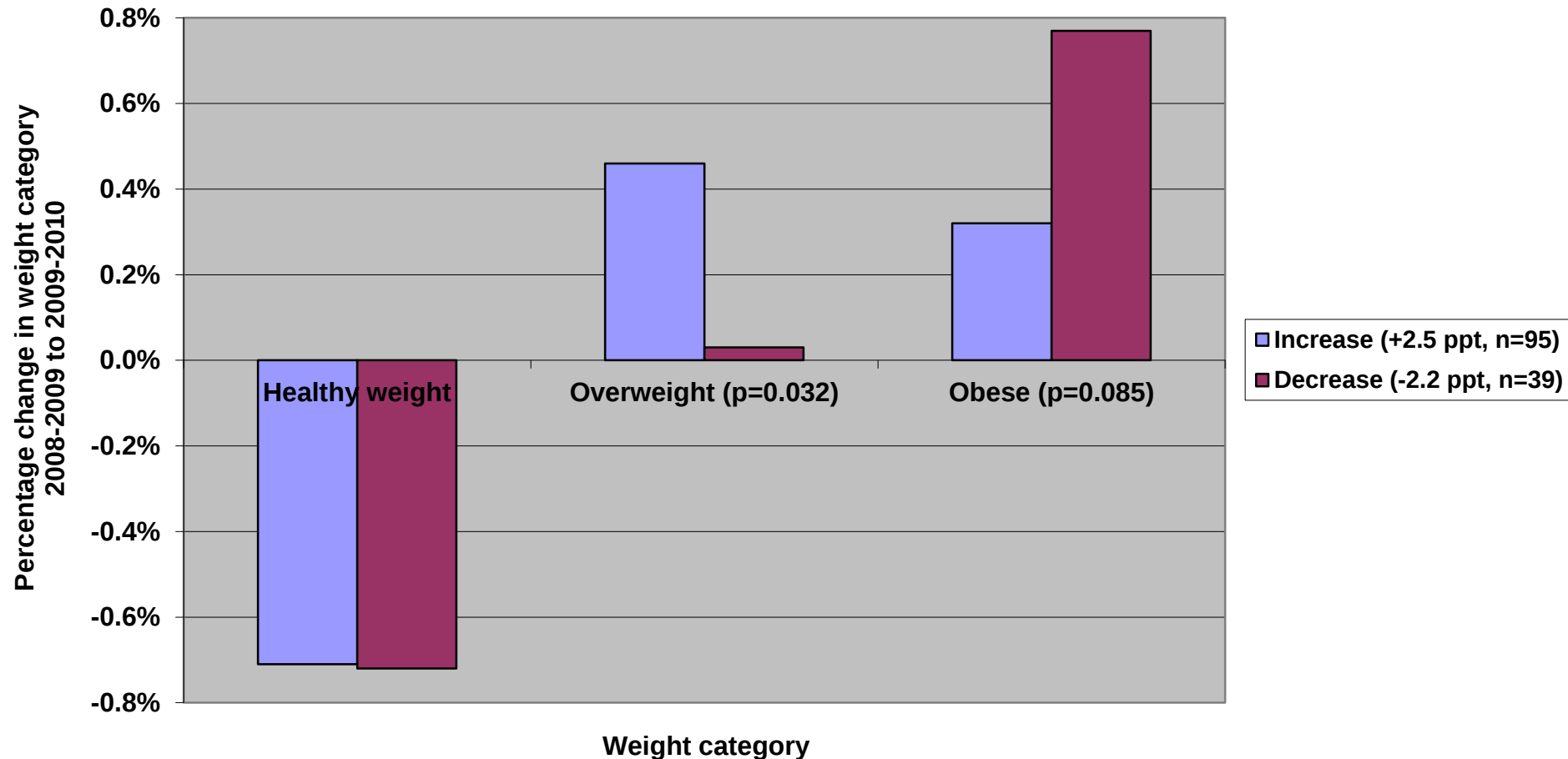
HYPOTHESIS

Increases in take up of **paid for** school lunches (2008-2009 to 2009-2010) are associated with lower levels of overweight and/or obesity over the same period, at both LA and school level

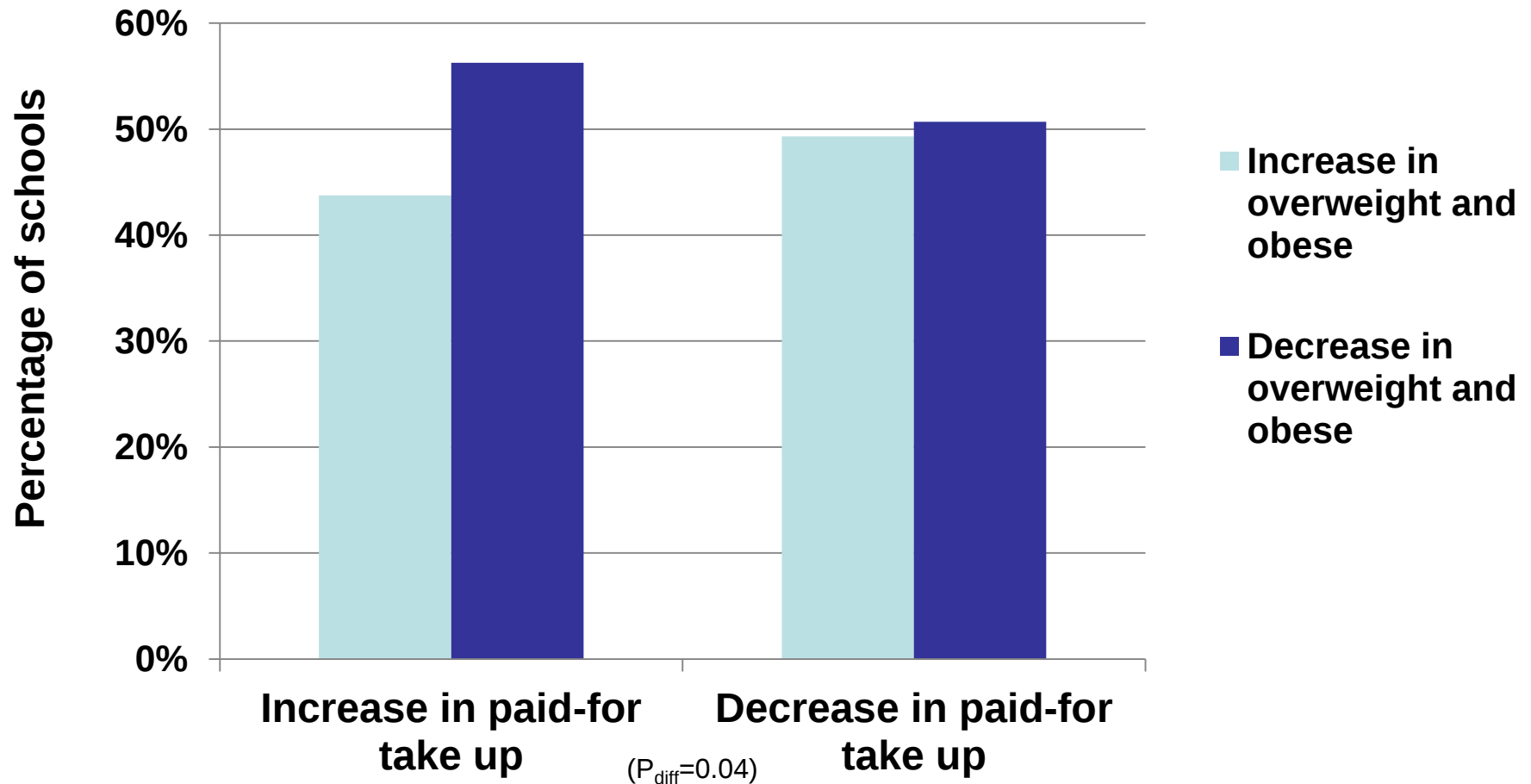
Overweight and obesity, Year 6, by IMD decile, England, 2010-2011 (NCMP)



Mean change in percentage of Year 6 children who were classified as healthy weight, overweight or obese, 2008-2009 to 2009-2010, according to whether the take up of paid-for school lunches in primary schools in the LA increased or decreased



Percentage of schools that showed an increase or decrease in the percentage of Year 6 children classified as overweight or obese, 2008-2009 to 2009-2010, according to whether the take up of paid-for school lunches in the school increased or decreased



Effectiveness of School Programs in Preventing Childhood Obesity: Nova Scotia

- **5200 grade 5 students along with their parents and school principals**
- **Measured height and weight, assessed dietary intake, physical and sedentary activities.**
- **Compared body weight, diet, and physical activity across schools with and without nutrition programs**

Source: Veugelers PJ, Fitzgerald AL. *Am J Public Health*. 2005;95:432–435

Effectiveness of School Programs in Preventing Childhood Obesity: Nova Scotia

Three groups of schools

- No programme
- Declared “Nutrition program”
- Following CDC guidelines (AVHPSP = Annapolis Valley Health Promoting Schools Project)

Source: Veugelers PJ, Fitzgerald AL. *Am J Public Health*. 2005;95:432–435

Effectiveness of School Programs in Preventing Childhood Obesity: Nova Scotia

TABLE 1—Body Weight, Diet, and Activities of Grade 5 Students in Nova Scotia, Canada, by School Program Category

	No Program	Nutrition Program	AVHPSP Program
Overweight, %	32.8	34.2	17.9
Obese, %	9.9	10.4	4.1
Mean no. of fruit/vegetable servings per day	5.7	5.8	6.7
Calories from fat, %	30.3	30.3	29.4
Overall diet quality, index score	62.3	62.1	64.5
Physical activity, %			
≤ 3 times/wk	21.9	24.6	19.9
4–6 times/wk	33.5	32.3	35.4
≥ 7 times/wk	44.5	43.1	44.7
Sedentary activities, %			
≤ 3 h/d	49.9	50.6	56.6
4–6 h/d	29.5	28.5	27.8
≥ 7 h/d	20.6	20.9	15.6

Source: Veugelers PJ, Fitzgerald AL. *Am J Public Health*. 2005;95:432–435

Obesity and sweet drink consumption in children

Ebbeling CB, Feldman HA, Chomitz VR, Antonelli TA, Gortmaker SL, Osganian SK, Ludwig DS. A randomized trial of sugar-sweetened beverages and adolescent body weight. *N Engl J Med*. 2012 Oct 11;367(15):1407-16.

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A trial of sugar-free or sugar-sweetened beverages and body weight in children. *N Engl J Med*. 2012 Oct 11;367(15):1397-406

Hooley M, Skouteris H, Millar L. The relationship between childhood weight, dental caries and eating practices in children aged 4-8 years in Australia, 2004-2008. *Pediatr Obes*. 2012 Dec;7(6):461-70.

Shang XW, Liu AL, Zhang Q, Hu XQ, Du SM, Ma J, Xu GF, Li Y, Guo HW, Du L, Li TY, Ma GS. Report on childhood obesity in China (9): sugar-sweetened beverages consumption and obesity. *Biomed Environ Sci*. 2012 Apr;25(2):125-32.

The impact of the standards...

... cost-effectiveness

Cost and Impact

- SFT funding over 6 years
 - £15.4m + £22.6m = £38m direct grant from DfE
 - Number of new school lunch pupils = 270,000
 - SFT spend **per new school lunch pupil**
= £38m/270,000 = **£141/pupil**
 - SFT spend for pupils to eat more healthily at lunchtime
 - 3m school lunches per day
 - SFT spend **per child per year** to have a school lunch
= £38m/(3m x 6y) = **£2.11**
 - SFT spend **per school lunch** = £2.11/190 days = **1.1p/lunch**
- School lunch grant from DfE – ring-fenced
 - 2005-2008 £240m (ingredient subsidy)
= £240m/(3m x 3y x 190 days) = **14p/meal**
 - 2008-2011 £240m (food + other subsidy) $\cong$ **11p/meal**
- School lunch grant from DfE 2011-12 - £80m, not ring-fenced

CONCLUSION

- Initial drop in school lunch take up reversed within two years
 - *Over 270,000 more children now eat a school meal*
- Compliance with the standards is good, but not perfect
- Dietary choices and nutrient intake substantially better
 - *Newcastle findings show impact on total diet*
- Benefit from better food and dining environments at lunchtime also include better:
 - *cognitive function*
 - *Attainment*
 - *growth*
- Impact of compulsory standards in 2006-2011 contrasts with 2001-2005 guidelines which showed no impact



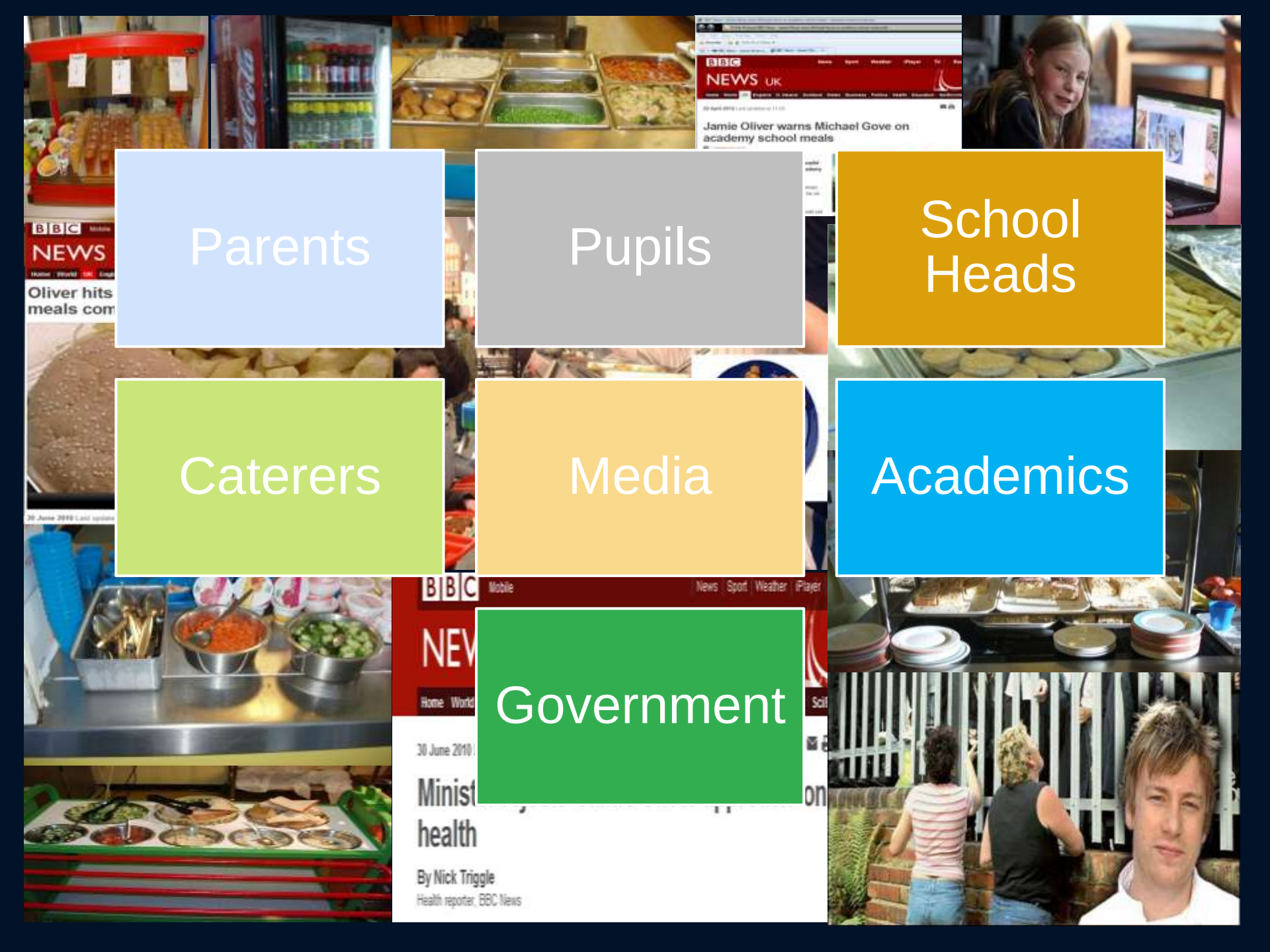
School lunch: does it really matter?

S Spence, J Delve, K Hendry, E Stamp, J Matthews,
M White and A Adamson

Overview

- Background
- Aim
- Methods
- Key findings
- Conclusions and additional analysis





Parents

Pupils

School
Heads

Caterers

Media

Academics

Government

Background



Public health



School
environment

Research to date: school & packed lunch



- Evans CEL, Greenwood DC, Thomas JD, Cade JE. A cross-sectional survey of children's packed lunches in the UK: food-and nutrient-based results. *J Epidemiol Community Health* **2010**; 64: 977–83.
- Evans CEL, Greenwood DC, Thomas JD, Cleghorn CL, Kitchen MS, Cade JE. SMART lunch box intervention to improve the food and nutrient content of children's packed lunches: UK wide cluster randomised controlled trial. *J Epidemiol Community Health* **2010**; 64: 970–6.
- Gatenby L. Children's nutritional intake as part of the Eat Well Do Well scheme in Kingston-upon-Hull-a pilot study. *Nutr Bull* **2011**; 36: 87–94.
- Pearce J, Harper C, Haroun D, Wood L, Nelson M. Key differences between school lunches and packed lunches in primary schools in England in 2009. *Public Health Nutr* **2011**; 14(8):1507–1510.

An evaluation of the new school food policy

Aim

- To evaluate the impact of the new school food policy on children's* total dietary intake

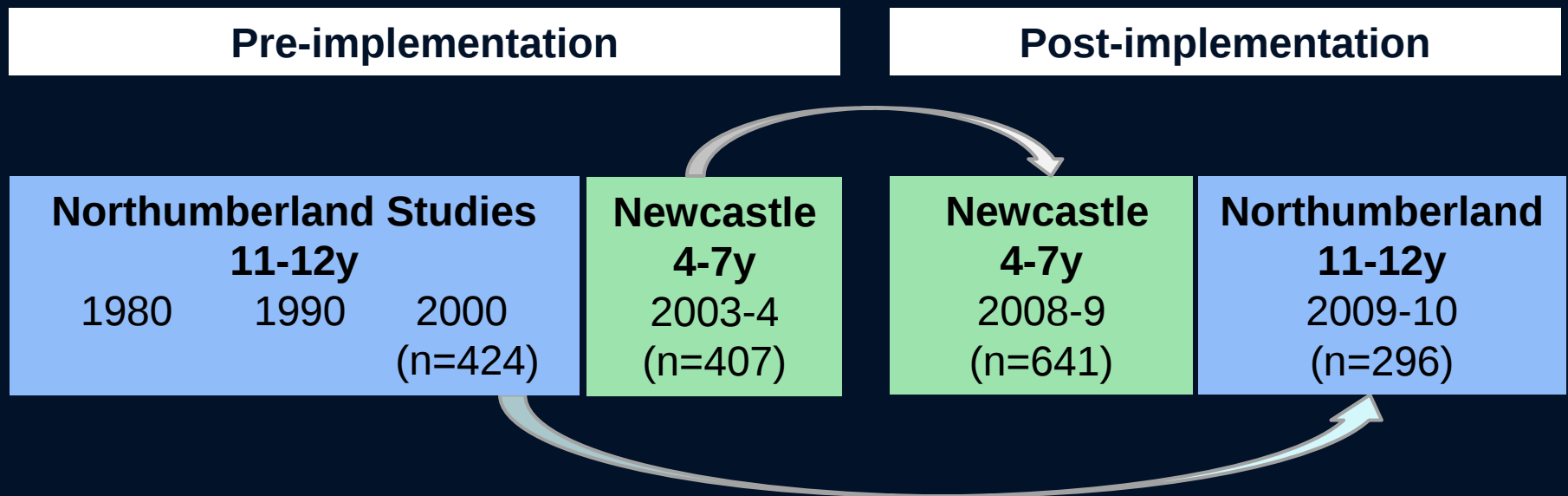
*4-7 & 11-12 year olds

Key questions

- Have school & packed lunches changed?
- What is the impact of 'lunch type' on total diet post-policy?



Cross-sectional studies



Methods

Dietary

Primary schools



Newcastle
School Food
Study

Human Nutrition Research Centre
M1, 151, 1st Floor
William Leech Building
Framlington Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 4HH
Tel: 0191 222 5276

Human Nutrition Research Centre
M1, 151, 1st Floor
William Leech Building
Framlington Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 4HH
Tel: 0191 222 5276

This
food diary
belongs to

Name _____

Class _____

ID No. _____

Anthropometric

- Height
- Weight

Middle schools



Northumberland Schools Food Study

Human Nutrition Research Centre
Newcastle University

Name: _____

Please complete this diary on the following days:
Day 1 _____
Day 2 _____
Day 3 _____

Thank you

Please leave this section blank:
ID no. _____ Class _____ Diary no. _____



Socio-economic

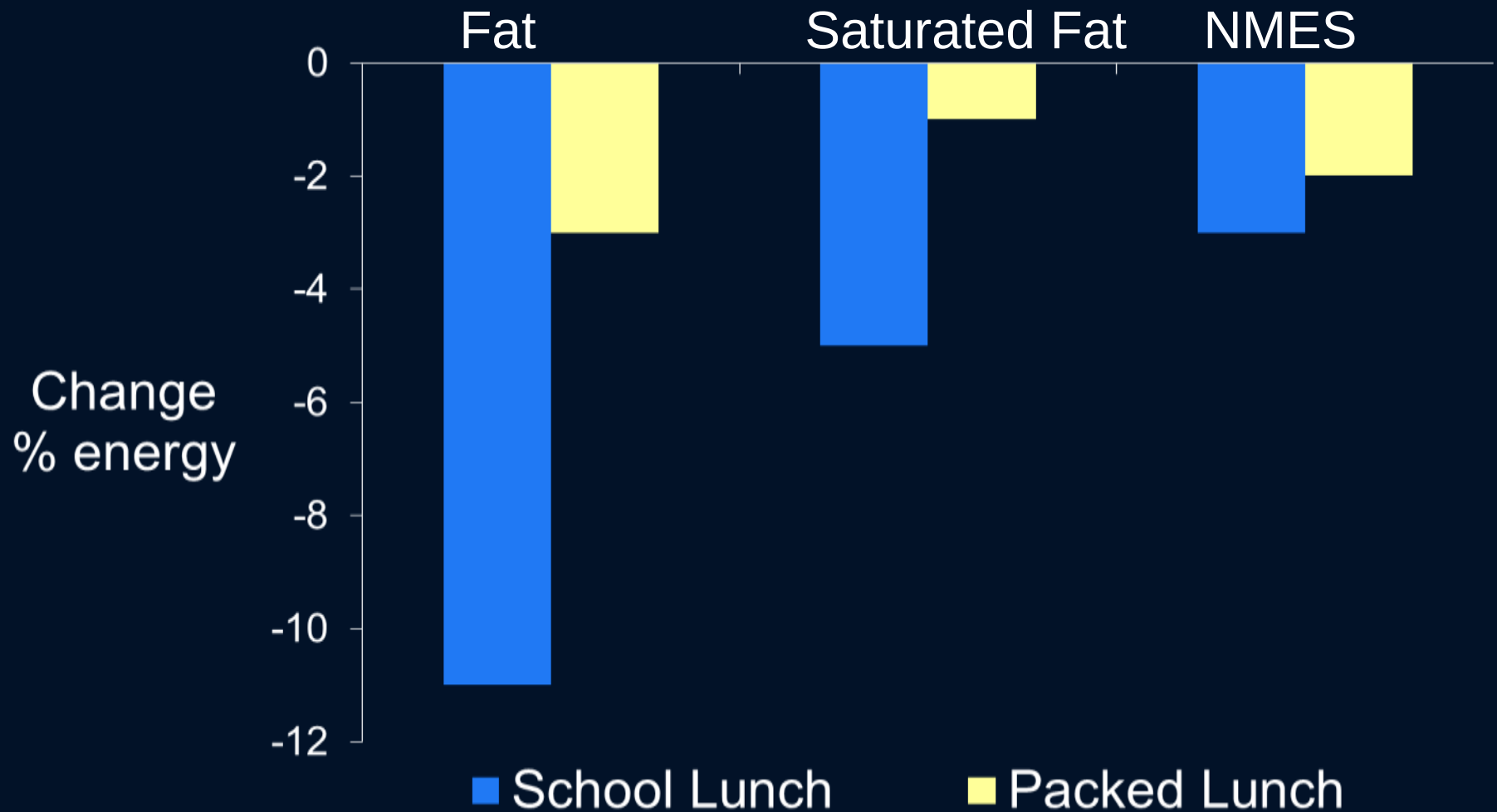
- Postcodes



Key findings 2003-4 to 2008-9

4-7 year olds

School & packed lunch: % energy

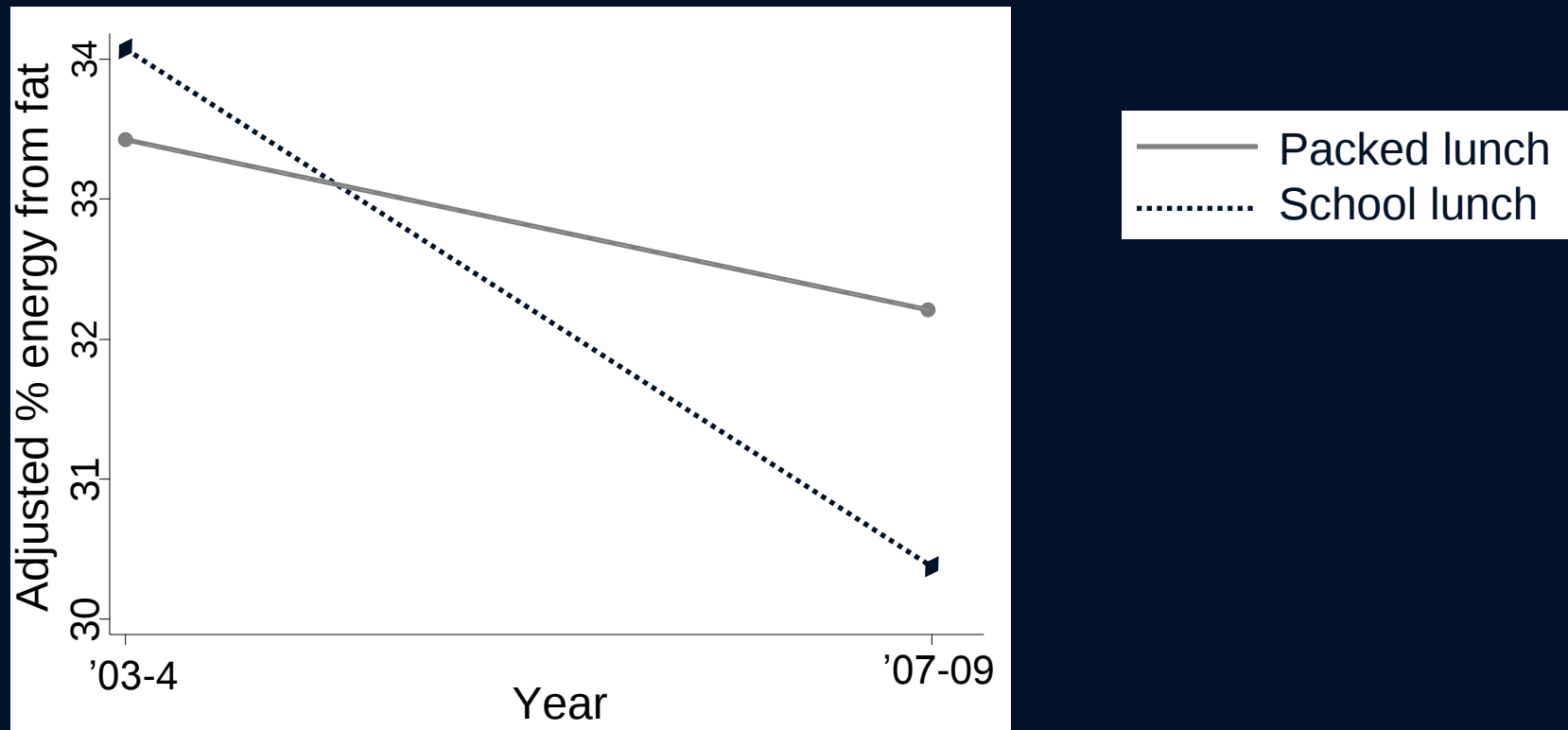


$p < 0.001$ for all apart from saturated fat packed lunch $p = 0.04$

School & packed lunch: nutrients

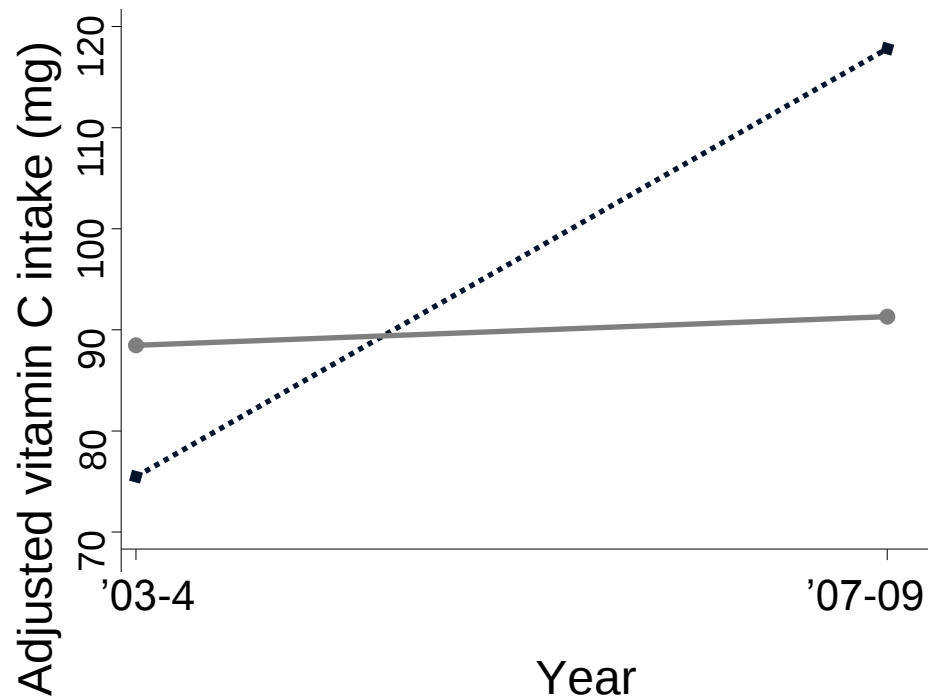
Nutrient	School Lunch					Packed Lunch				
	2003-4		2008-9		p	2003-4		2008-9		p
	n=233		n=323			n=152		n=309		
	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd		
NMES (g)	11.4	6	10.7	5	<0.001	27.9	12	23.9	11	<0.001
Sodium (mg)	536	168	466	167	<0.001	766	243	724	223	0.01
Calcium (mg)	136	62	166	69	<0.001	215	93	218	94	0.58
Iron (mg)	1.8	0.5	2.3	0.8	<0.001	1.9	0.6	1.9	0.6	0.54
Zinc (mg)	1.4	0.5	1.7	0.6	<0.001	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.6	0.48

Impact on total diet: % energy fat



$p < 0.001$

Impact on total diet: vitamin C



— Packed lunch
..... School lunch

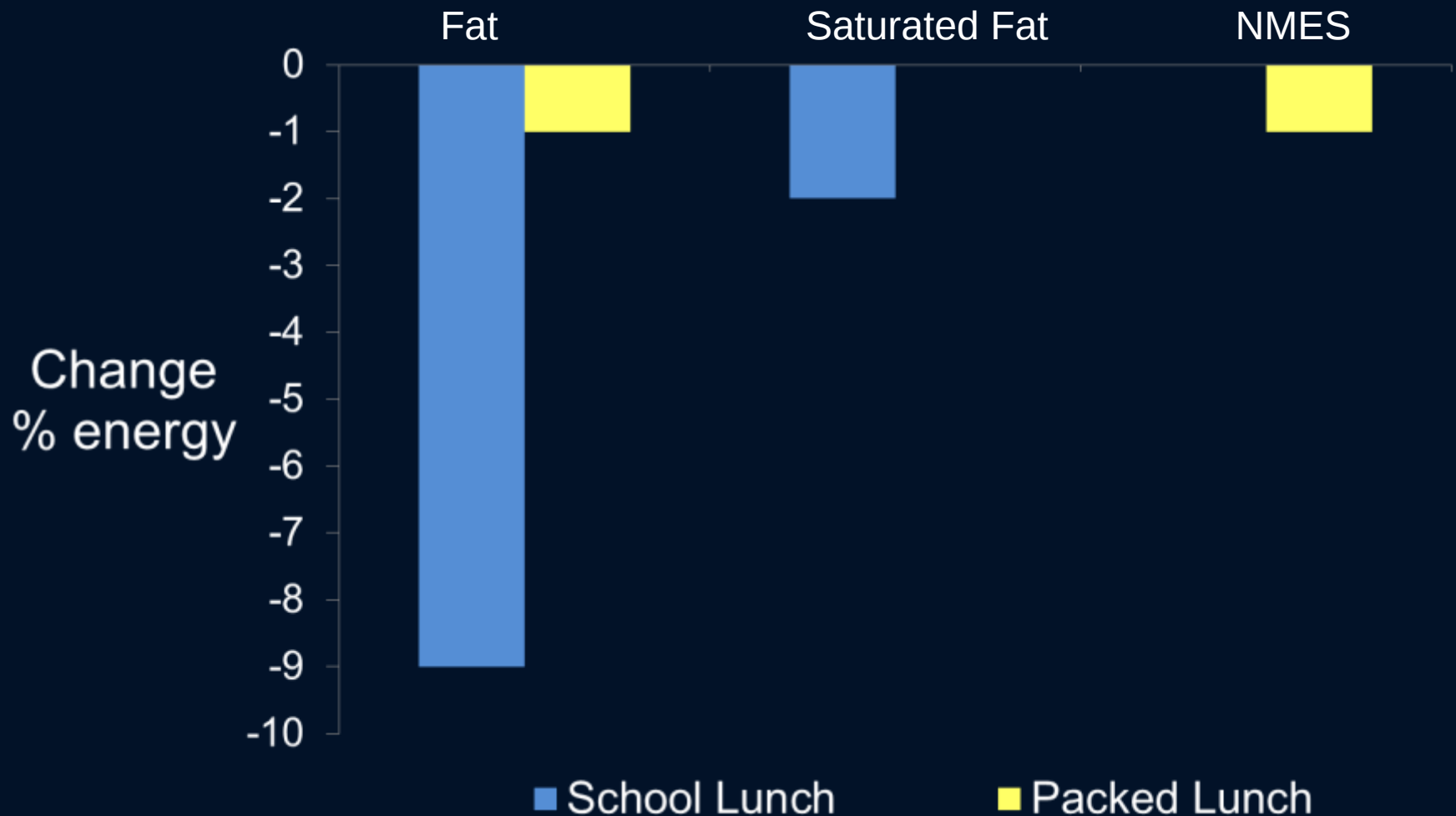
$p < 0.001$



Key findings 1999-00 to 2009-10

11-12 year olds

School & packed lunch: % energy

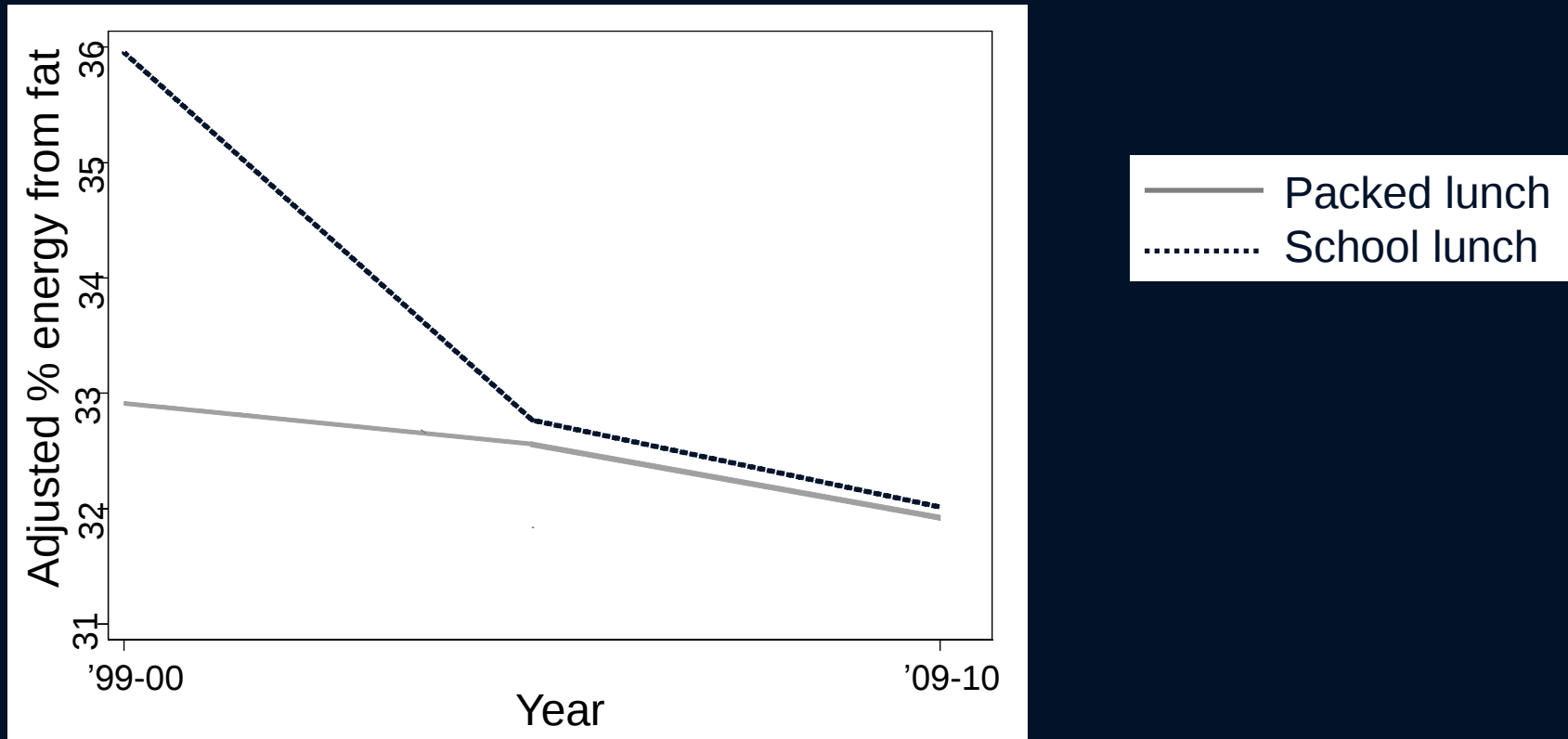


School lunch $p < 0.001$ fat and saturated fat, $p = 0.84$ NMES; Packed lunch NS

School & packed lunch: nutrients

Nutrient	School Lunch					Packed Lunch				
	1999-00		2009-10		p	1999-00		2009-10		p
	n=263		n=80			n=65		n=139		
	mean	sd	mean	sd		mean	sd	mean	sd	
NMES (g)	22	11	16	11	<0.001	27	14	26	14	0.68
Sodium (mg)	881	264	514	191	<0.001	949	410	882	300	0.06
Calcium (mg)	197	83	182	95	0.28	219	121	291	167	0.004
Iron (mg)	2.8	0.9	2.1	0.8	<0.001	2.5	1.0	2.4	1.0	0.12
Zinc (mg)	1.8	0.7	1.9	1.0	0.68	1.6	0.8	1.9	0.9	0.62

Impact on total diet: % energy from fat



$p < 0.001$

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

- Schools
- Methods
- Unique dietary data

Limitations

- No control group
- Generalisability

Conclusions

Competition



Compliance



Food choice



Other factors



Additional analysis...

Addressing inequalities:

Have the implementation of these standards had the same impact on the food intake of children across the socio-economic spectrum?



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- Lay Observers
- Schools
- Parents and Children



School Meals Policy in Perspective: Legislation and Child Growth

Vicki McGowan

PhD Candidate

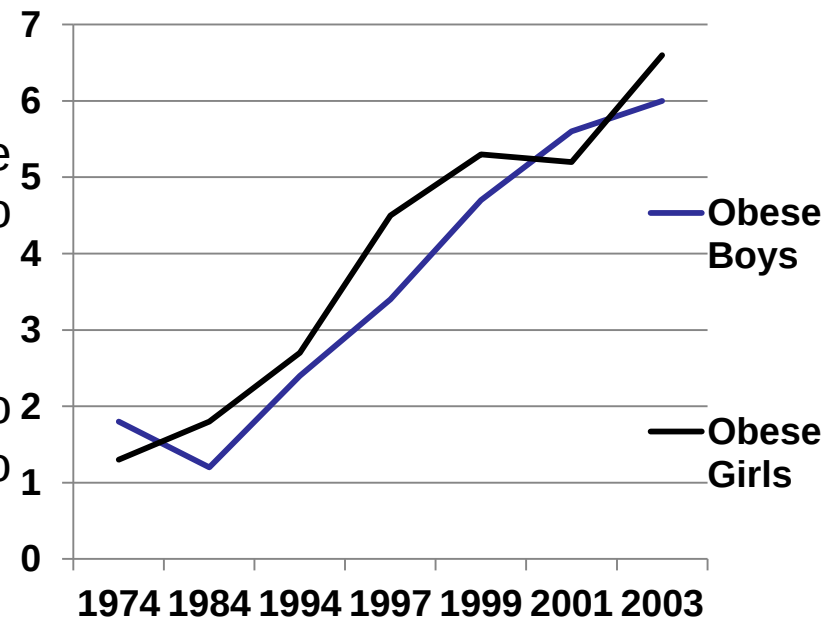
Department of Anthropology

Policy in Perspective

- Introduction, aims, and methods
- Brief History of School Meals
- Datasets
- Limitations
- Changes in average BMI 1908 – 2010
- Policy and Child Growth
- What next?
- Acknowledgements

Introduction

- In 2005 Jamie Oliver brought media spotlight to nutritionally poor quality school meals.
- Increasing concern over child health due to rises in prevalence of childhood obesity/overweight.
- A study in 2005 showed obesity prevalence from 1984 to 2003 had risen from 1.2% to 6.0% in boys and 1.8% to 6.6% in girls.
- Overweight also increased from 1984 to 1994 – 5.4% to 9.0% in boys and 9.3% to 13.5% in girls.



Aims and Methods

Aims

- To explore historical links between changes in government policy against increases in childhood overweight and obesity since the introduction of school meals in 1906.

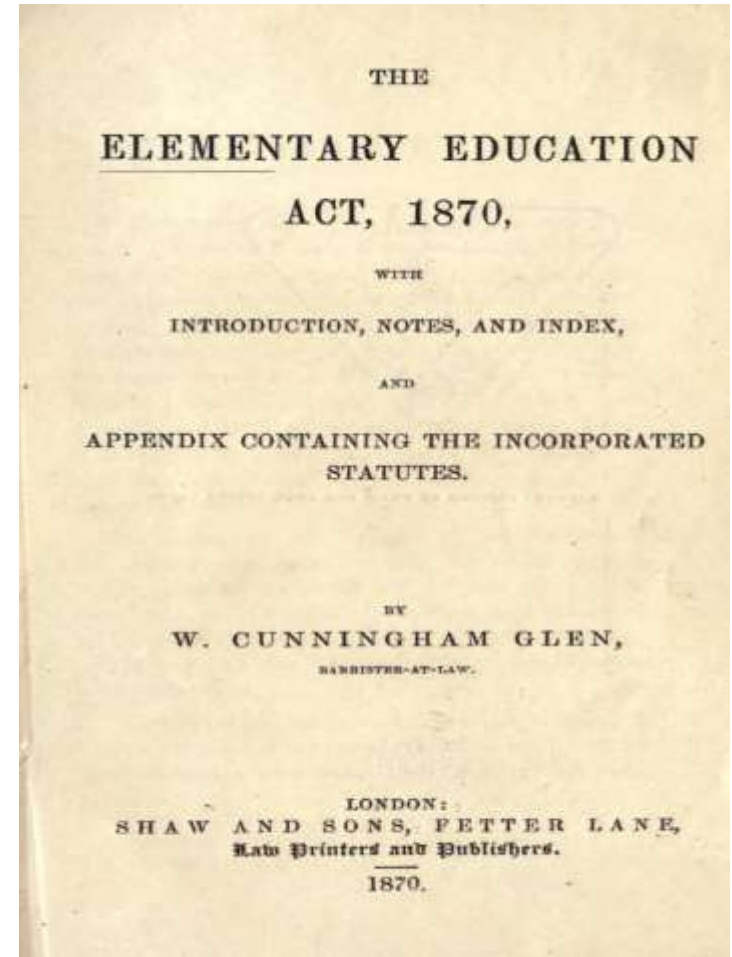
Methods

- School meals policy data gathered from House of Commons Parliamentary Papers online resource and Hansard Debates.
- Height and weight data for children aged 9.99-11.99 sourced from Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS), now part of the UK Data Service.



The Origins of School Meals

- **Education Act 1880** introduced compulsory education for all children.
- Children from poor families entered school for the first time and often fell asleep in class and had difficulty concentrating.
- Attributed to poorer children being malnourished.
- 1879 free school meals were provided to children in Manchester who were “destitute and badly nourished”

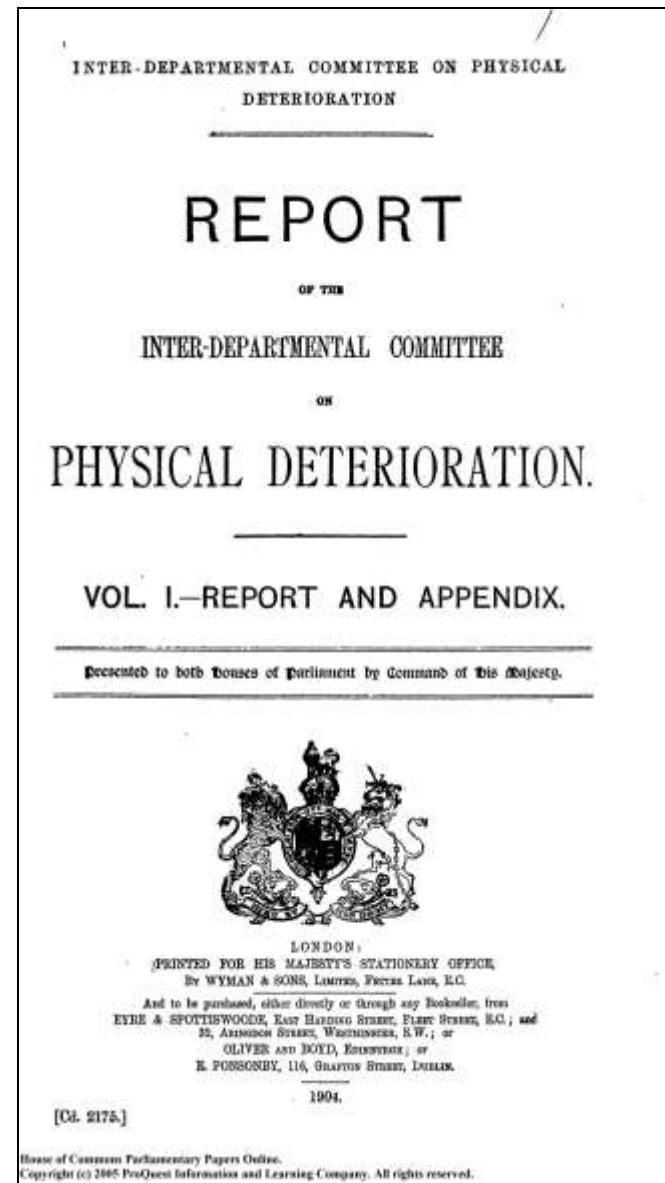


The Origins of School Meals

1904 Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration

The original TERMS OF REFERENCE to the Committee were:—

To make a preliminary enquiry into the allegations concerning the deterioration of certain classes of the population as shown by the large percentage of rejections for physical causes of recruits for the Army and by other evidence, especially the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland), and to consider in what manner the medical profession can best be consulted on the subject with a view to the appointment of a Royal Commission, and the terms of reference to such a Commission, if appointed.



The Origins of School Meals

1904 Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration Recommendation

(42) *Feeding of elementary school children.*

Par. 358-363.

The Committee recommend that definite provision should be made by the various Local Authorities for dealing with the question of underfed children in accordance with the methods indicated in paragraphs 358-365 of the Report. The Committee, it will be seen, do not contemplate any one uniform method of procedure, but think that regard should be had to the varying circumstances of different localities. They also suggest safeguards against economic abuse.

The Origins of School Meals

Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906

- The Act allowed, but not required, Local Authorities to provide meals to children in attendance at elementary school.

1. A local education authority, under Part III. of the Education Act, 1902, may take such steps as they think fit for the provision of meals for children in attendance at any public elementary school in their area, and for that purpose—

- At this time school meal provision was not mandatory, therefore, some children still did not receive a meal during their time at school.

[8 Edw. 7.] *Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906.* [Ch. 57.]



CHAPTER 57.

An Act to make provision for Meals for Children attending Public Elementary Schools in England and Wales. A.D. 1906.
[21st December 1906.]

BE it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :

1. A local education authority under Part III. of the Education Act, 1902, may take such steps as they think fit for the provision of meals for children in attendance at any public elementary school in their area, and for that purpose—

Power of local education authority to aid school canteen committees in the provision of meals for children.

2 Edw. 7. c. 42.

- may associate with themselves any committee on which the authority are represented, who will undertake to provide food for those children (in this Act called a "school canteen committee"); and
- may aid that committee by furnishing such land, buildings, furniture, and apparatus, and such officers and servants as may be necessary for the organization, preparation, and service of such meals;

but, save as herein-after provided, the authority shall not incur any expense in respect of the purchase of food to be supplied at such meals.

2.—(1) There shall be charged to the parent of every child in respect of every meal furnished to that child under this Act such an amount as may be determined by the local education authority, and, in the event of payment not being made by the parent, it shall be the duty of the authority, unless they are satisfied that the parent is unable by reason of circumstances other than his own default to pay the amount, to require the payment of that amount from that parent, and any such amount may be recovered summarily as a civil debt.

Recovery of the cost of meals.

1907 – Bradford Education Committee Report

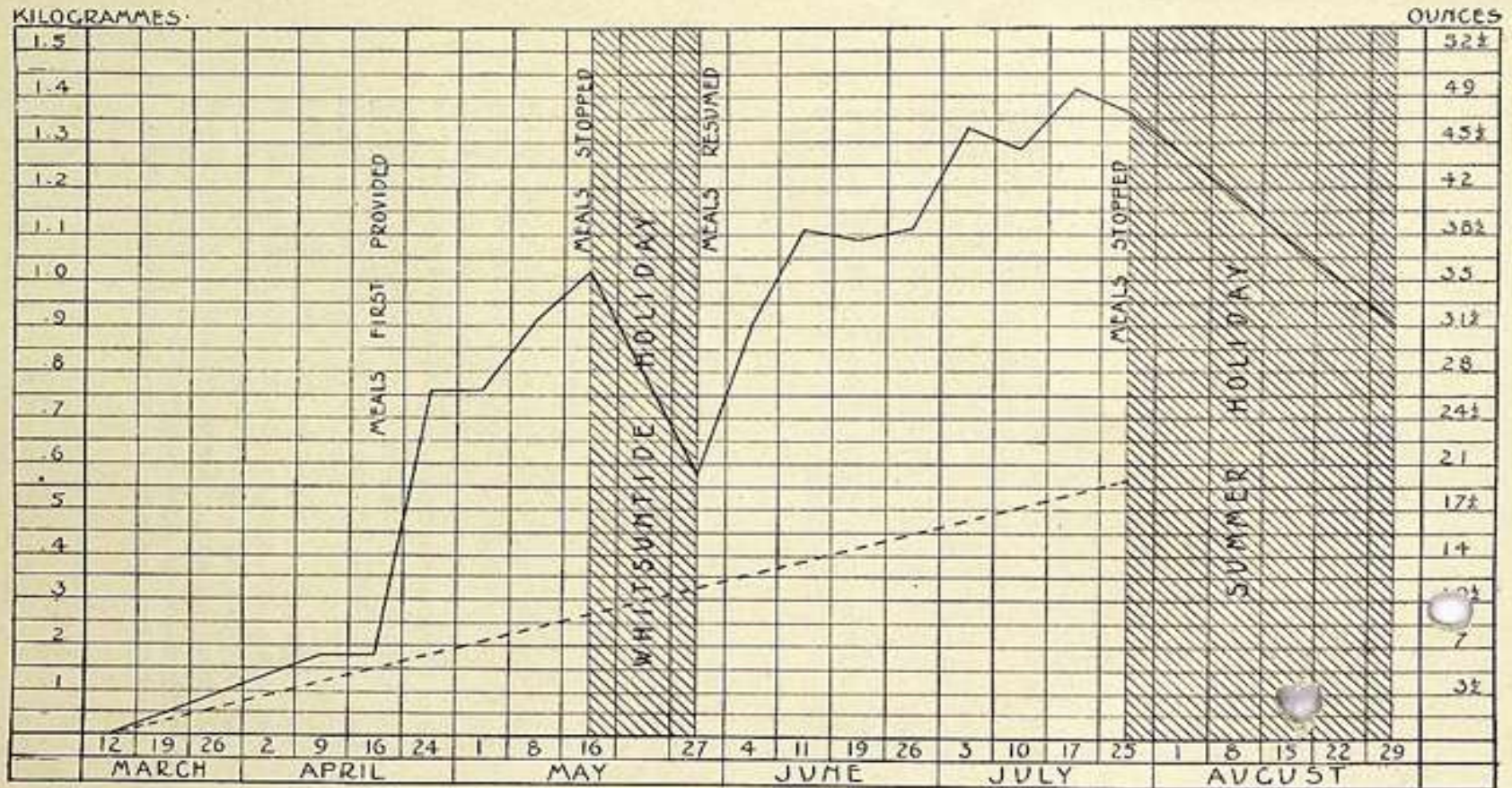


CHART ILLUSTRATING THE AVERAGE GAIN OR LOSS IN WEIGHT-DURING THE INTERVALS SHEWN- OF THE CHILDREN WHO WERE FED. THE BROKEN LINE SHEWS THE AVERAGE INCREASE IN WEIGHT- DURING THE SAME TIME- OF THE CONTROL CHILDREN.

1907

The First Nutritional Standards

- 1941 – The Board of Education began a campaign to expand the number of meals served to 1 million within a year.
- Government Circular No. 1571 advised Local Authorities that a school meal should provide children with:
 - 1,000 kilocalories
 - 20-25g of first class protein
 - 30g fat in all forms

School Meals become Mandatory

Education Act 1944

- The Act transformed the suggestion of school meal provision to a statutory duty.
- Local Authorities were now required to provide a meal in maintained/public schools to all children who wanted them.

49. Regulations made by the Minister shall impose upon local education authorities the duty of providing milk, meals and other refreshment for pupils in attendance at schools and county colleges maintained by them; and such regulations shall make provision as to the manner in which and the persons by whom the expense of providing such milk, meals or refreshment is to be defrayed, as to the facilities to be afforded (including any buildings or equipment to be provided) and as to the services to be rendered by managers governors and teachers with respect to the provision of such milk, meals or refreshment, and as to such other consequential matters as the Minister considers expedient, so, however, that such regulations shall not impose upon teachers at any school or college duties upon days on which the school or college is not open for instruction, or duties in respect of meals other than the supervision of pupils, and shall not require the managers or governors of a voluntary school to incur expenditure.

10
Education Act, 1944.
7 & 8 GEO. 6. CH. 31.

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS.

PART I.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION.

Section.

1. Appointment of Minister in charge of education and establishment of Ministry of Education.
2. Transfer of property and functions to Minister and construction of Acts and documents.
3. Seal and acts of Minister.
4. Central Advisory Councils.
5. Annual report to Parliament.

PART II.

THE STATUTORY SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION.

6. Local education authorities.

THE THREE STAGES OF THE SYSTEM.

7. Stages and purposes of statutory system of education.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Provision and Maintenance of Primary and Secondary Schools.

8. Duty of local education authorities to secure provision of primary and secondary schools.
9. County schools, voluntary schools, nursery schools, and special schools.
10. Requirements as to school premises.
11. Development plans as to primary and secondary schools.
12. Local education orders with respect to primary and secondary education.
13. Establishment and discontinuance of county and voluntary schools.

Increasing uptake

- By October 1948 almost 2,750,000 or 56.6% of the total number of children in grant-aided schools were taking a meal and 88% drank school milk.
- Although school meals were introduced to help “diminish physical deterioration” the aims were broadened to include opportunities for social training and develop good food habits.
- In 1952 Penelope Hall stated:
 - “School meals should be properly supervised, served in an orderly manner, preferably with the help of the children themselves, and eaten without haste in a **happy atmosphere amid pleasant surroundings**” (my emphasis).
 - “These conditions are not easy to attain... shortages of premises, staff, and equipment meant that many children ate their dinners in makeshift premises in overcrowded conditions”

Maintaining the Standards

- 1955 Government Circular No. 290 recommended amendments to the previous nutritional standards which now stated that meals should provide:
 - 650-1,000 kilocalories – depending on age and sex
 - 20g of protein of animal origin
 - 25-30g of fat in all forms
 - Meals should be supplemented with 3/4oz dried milk, representing 45g of protein per week
 - Children should receive 1/3 pint of fresh milk every day.
- In 1965 the Working Party on Nutritional Standards of the School Dinner recommended the nutritional standards should be maintained to protect those who heavily rely on the school meal.

The Black Report

Review of Nutritional Standards 1975

Each meal should provide:

- A minimum of 1/3 daily intake of energy – 880Kcals
- 1/3 – 1/2 daily intake of protein
- No longer minimum amounts for fat or standards for animal protein

The Black Report - Inequalities in Health 1980

School meals are vital to the health of children.

“to leave school children to make their own free choices of a meal would be wrong. This would be likely to lead to increases in obesity and dental caries”

However.....

The Education Act 1980

- This Act removed the requirement for Local Authorities to provide meals, except for those entitled to free school meals.
- It also removed the requirement for any meals provided to meet nutritional standards.

School meals

22.—(1) A local education authority—

- (a) may provide registered pupils at any school maintained by them with milk, meals or other refreshment ; and
- (b) shall provide such facilities as the authority consider appropriate for the consumption of any meals or other refreshment brought to the school by such pupils.

(2) A local education authority shall exercise their power under subsection (1)(a) above in relation to any pupil whose parents are in receipt of supplementary benefit or family income supplement so as to ensure that such provision is made for him in the middle of the day as appears to the authority to be requisite.



Education Act 1980

CHAPTER 20

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

School government

Section

1. Change of nomenclature.
2. Requirements as to governing bodies.
3. Grouping of schools under single governing body.
4. Governors' proceedings and tenure of office.
5. Governors as ex officio trustees.

Admission to schools

6. Parental preferences.
7. Appeals against admission decisions.
8. Information as to schools and admission arrangements.
9. Nursery schools and special schools.

School attendance orders

10. Determination of school to be named in order.
11. Amendment of order.

Establishment, discontinuance and alteration of schools

12. Establishment, discontinuance and alteration of schools by local education authorities.
13. Establishment and alteration of voluntary schools.
14. Approval of school premises.
15. Reduction of school places.
16. Provisions supplementary to ss. 12 to 15.

Awards and grants

17. Assisted places at independent schools.
18. Incidental expenses of pupils holding assisted places.
19. Awards for further and higher education.
20. Industrial scholarships.
21. Grants for education in Welsh.

Local Government Act 1988

ELIZABETH II

c. 9

The Local Government Act 1988

- This Act required all Local Authorities to put school meals out to tender.
- Guidelines stated the lowest bid wins the contract which put economy over quality.
- According to the School Meals Review Panel (2005) this effectively created an unregulated school meals market.
- Cooks described this piece of legislation as more damaging than the 1980 Education Act. It resulted in a mass de-skilling of the catering workforce.



Local Government Act 1988

1988 CHAPTER 9

An Act to secure that local and other public authorities undertake certain activities only if they can do so competitively; to regulate certain functions of local and other public authorities in connection with public supply or works contracts; to authorise and regulate the provision of financial assistance by local authorities for certain housing purposes; to prohibit the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities; to make provision about local authorities' publicity, local government administration, the powers of auditors, land held by public bodies, direct labour organisations, arrangements under the Employment and Training Act 1973, the Commission for Local Authority Accounts in Scotland, the auditing of accounts of local authorities in Scotland, and dog registration, dog licences and stray dogs; and for connected purposes. [24th March 1988]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

PART I

COMPETITION

Standards back on the Menu

- 2000 Food Standards Agency reports children were eating too much junk food, not taking enough exercise, and not eating enough fresh fruit and vegetables.
- 2001 Nutritional Standards made compulsory, guidelines based on food groups with the aim of giving children a balanced diet;
 - Starchy foods
 - Fruit and vegetables
 - Meat and fish
- Some argued these standards were not specific enough:

Sue Brighouse – Child Poverty Action Group Campaigner argued:

“We think the caterers have won the day because what they are saying is that it would be too difficult to implement nutrition-based standards”

Nutritional Standards back on the Menu

- 2005 – Recommendations from the School Meals Review Panel and the School Food Trust (now known as Children's Food Trust).
- From September 2008 for primary schools and September 2009 for Secondary schools – standards were required for all foods served in schools.
- Currently there are nutrient based standards and food based standards.
- BUT... Academies and Free schools are not required to meet these standards
- School Food Review..... ??



Datasets

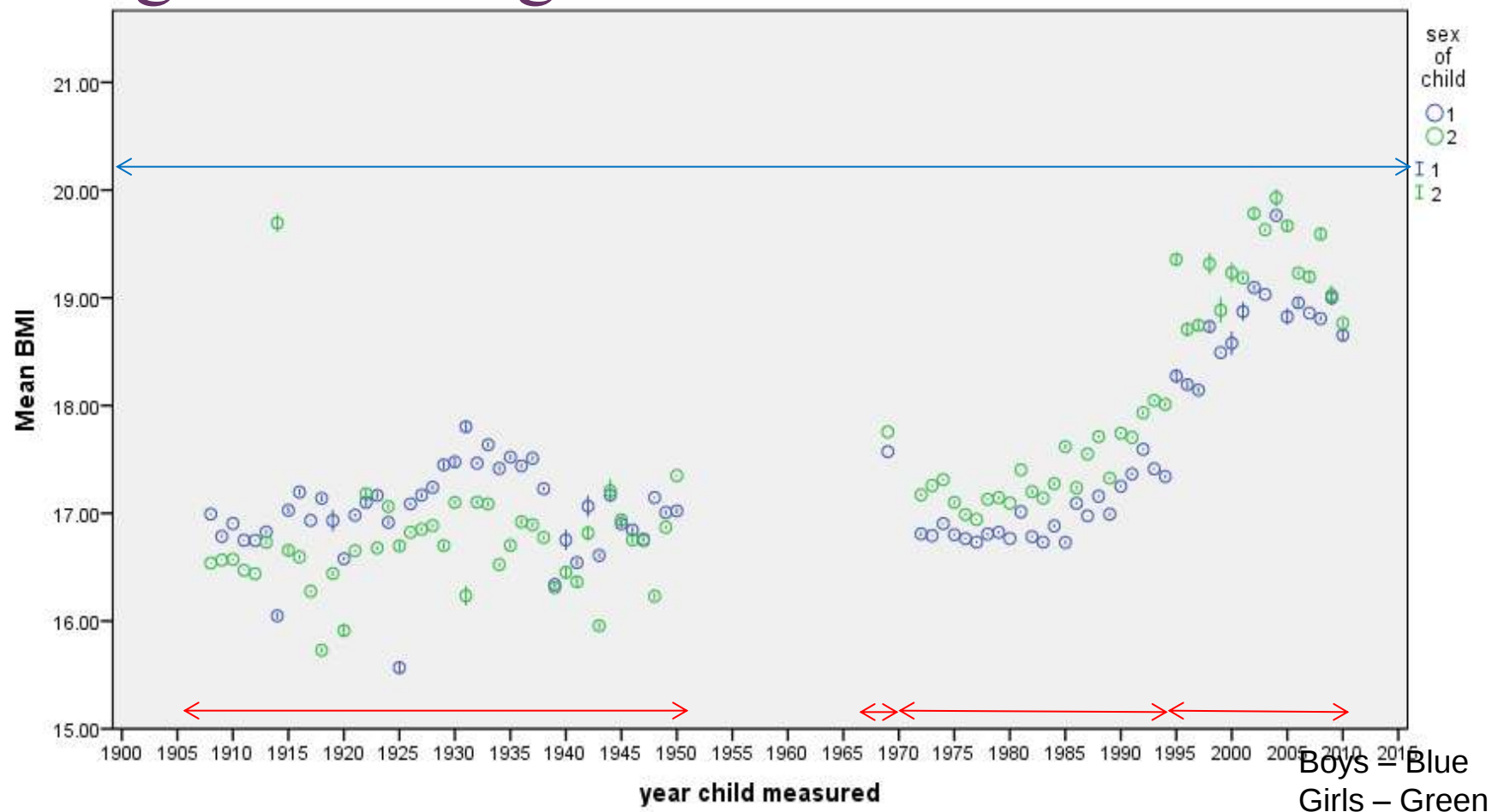
Dataset	Time period	Average age		Avg sample (per year)	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Harris	1908 - 1950	11.13	11.12	905	903
National Child Development Study	1969	11.33	11.33	6495	6194
British Cohort Study 1970	1980	10.20	10.20	6252	5908
National Study for Health and Growth	1972 – 1994	10.50	10.48	644	612
Health Survey for England	1995 – 2010	10.50	10.50	183	178

- Average BMI generated from height and weight data from these datasets.
- Sample sizes were weighted due to differences between datasets.

Limitations

- Difficulties locating comparable data – age range limited to 10-11.99.
- Lack of raw data from 1908 to 1950 – unable to assess BMI distribution.
- Only averages from each location available from 1908 to 1950 – averages were generated from each dataset to assess over time.
- No date of birth and date of measurement in HSE to calculate decimal age – combined age at last birthday 10 and 11 as child could be 10.99 on day of measurement, very different to child just turned 10.
- Potential differences in how children were measured – assuming standard anthropometrics were used but unable to clarify from 1908-1950.
- Differences in sample sizes for each year, standard deviations quite large in un-weighted data. Samples were weighted and confidence intervals reduced.

Changes in average BMI 1908 - 2010



95% CI

1908 – 1950: Harris

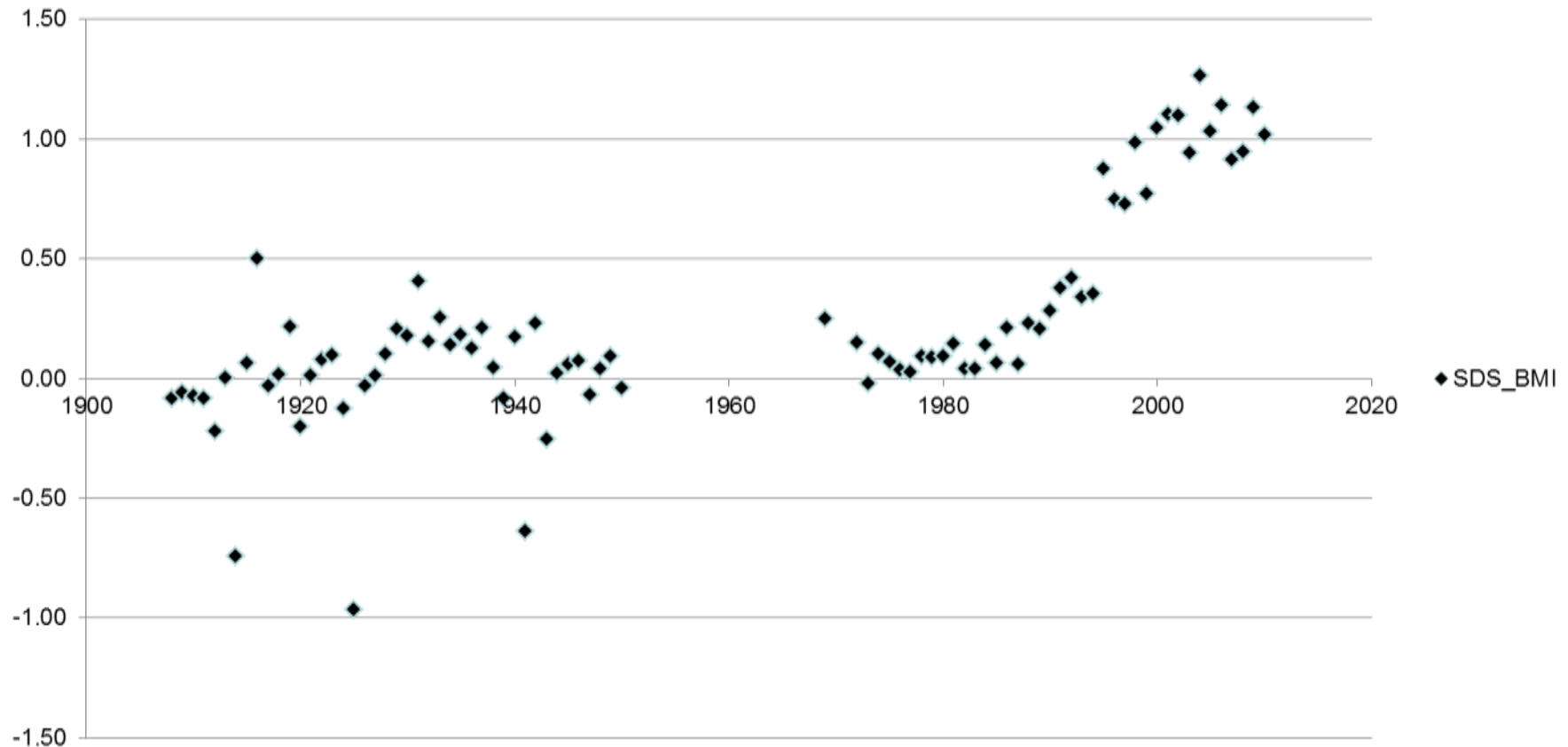
1969: National Child Development Study

1972 – 1994: National Study for Health & Growth
and British Cohort Study

1995 – 2010: Health Survey for England

BMI Cut off points at age 10.5:
Overweight: Boys - 20.2, Girls – 20.3
Obesity: Boys -24.6, Girls - 24.8
Cole et al (2000) *BMJ* 320:12401243

BMI z-scores boys aged 11



Cut-offs from World Health Organisation

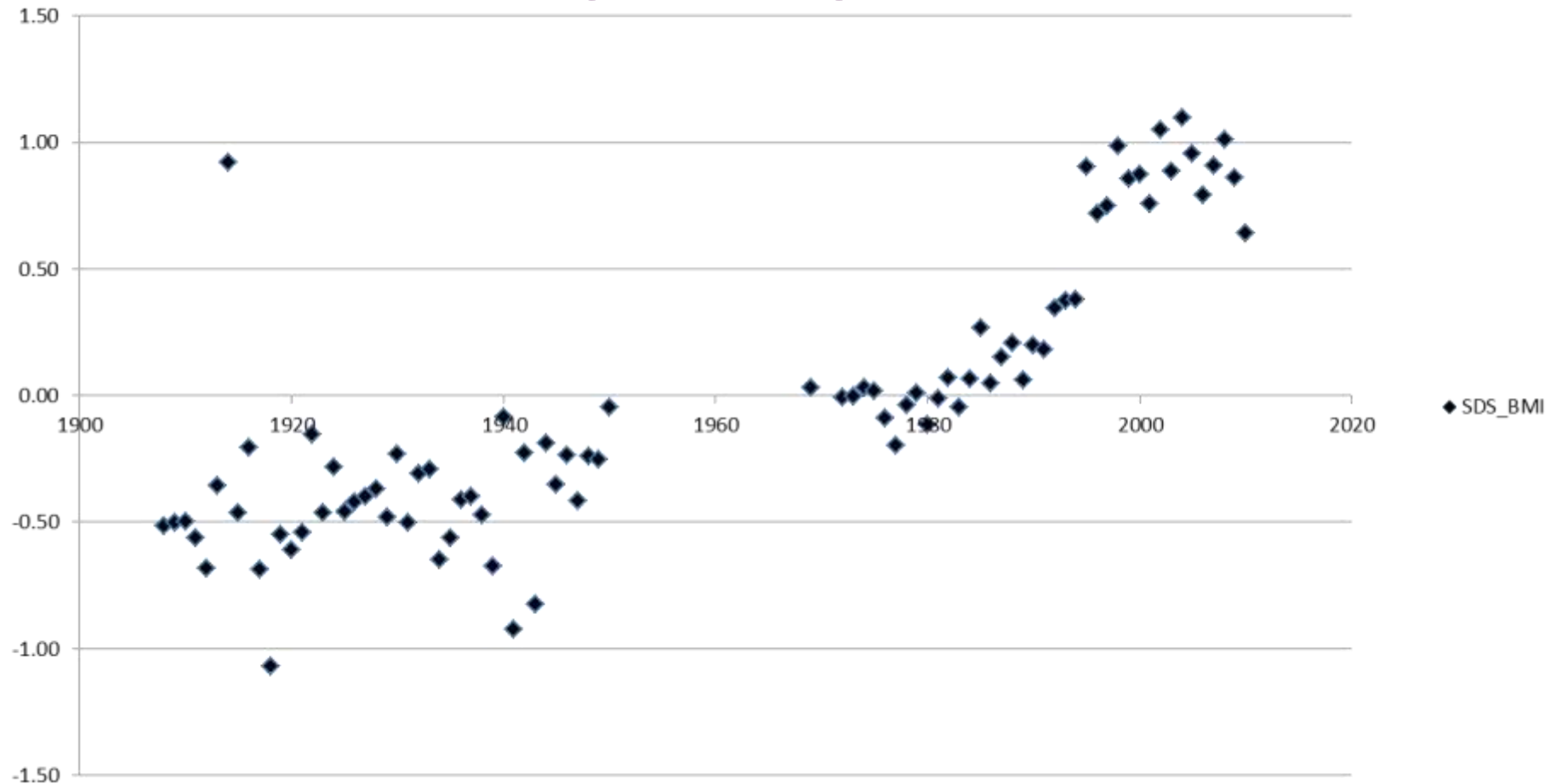
Overweight: $>+1SD$ (equivalent to BMI 25 kg/m² at 19 years)

Obesity: $>+2SD$

(equivalent to BMI 30 kg/m² at 19 years)

Thinness: $<-2SD$

BMI z-scores girls aged 11



Cut-offs from World Health Organisation

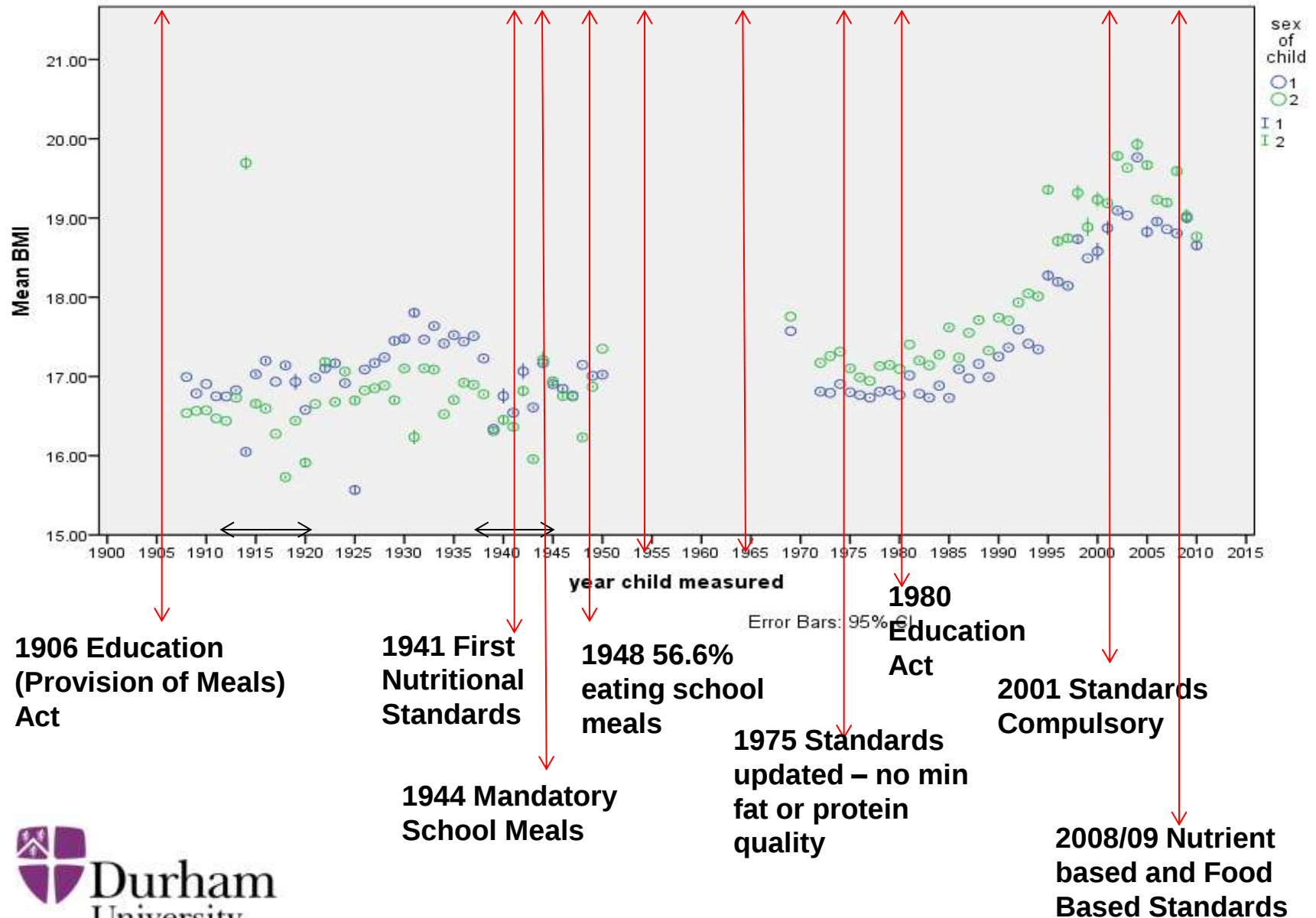
Overweight: $>+1SD$ (equivalent to BMI 25 kg/m² at 19 years)

Obesity: $>+2SD$

(equivalent to BMI 30 kg/m² at 19 years)

Thinness: $<-2SD$

Policy and Child Growth



What next?

- Further analysis of average BMI data
 - Assess distribution using datasets from 1969 – 1994
 - Generate z-scores using LMS Growth for all data
- Assess relationship between school meals and weight status at all available ages from 1969 to 1994 using:
 - National Child Development Study (age 5 and 7)
 - British Cohort Study (5, 10)
 - National Study of Health and Growth (all school ages)

Acknowledgements

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Wolfson Research Institute

Fuse

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“...Could I have some more please, Sir?...”

School meals: the potential to impact on inequalities and obesity

Speaker's Abstracts – Tuesday 9th April 2013

PhD projects: environment to policy

School meals policy in perspective: legislation and child growth

Victoria McGowan – Durham University

Childhood obesity and its associated health consequences have become major concerns for the UK government. This paper analyses a series of cross-sectional data for children's heights and weight collected in the UK from 1908 to the present in order to estimate changes in malnutrition (including underweight, overweight, and obesity) for UK children. In 1906, UK government documents had already highlighted that poorer children were shorter and underweight compared to their more affluent peers. In an attempt to alleviate the poor nutritional status of many British children at that time, school meals were introduced following the 1906 Education Act and have since provided a strategy for influencing child growth and development in Britain for over one hundred years. They remain an avenue for potential nutritional intervention. Here, we address the question of whether contemporary children from low socioeconomic households are both shorter and overweight compared to their more affluent peers, and analyse the anthropometric status of poorer children during the course of the last century. We also discuss whether UK government policies on school meals have, since their introduction, had a genuine impact (either positive or negative) on observed, longitudinal changes in childhood nutrition.

A world unto itself: space, power and sociality in the dining hall

Erika McClure, J Rahman, GR Bentley - Durham University

The relationship between childhood obesity and school meals has been of interest to researchers for some time. While the research lens has primarily focused on the foods consumed during lunchtimes, it is apparent that both the physical space of the school lunchroom and the people inside it contribute greatly to both what and how children eat. Based on observational work done in school lunchrooms across Northeast England over a period of two years, this paper draws on a variety of previous work in anthropology of food and children's geography. Relationships between children's eating behaviours and the following have been identified:

- 1) the physical layout of the lunchroom itself,
- 2) the dynamic between individual children and lunchroom staff, and....
- 3) peer interactions in the lunchroom. Only through the combination of these perspectives can a more comprehensive view of children's eating behaviours be developed.

School lunch: does it really matter?

Suzanne Spence – Newcastle University

Following Jamie Oliver's media broadcast '*Jamie's School Dinners*' in 2005, school lunch has received a considerable amount of attention from parents, media, academics and government. In 2006, government legislation required primary and secondary schools to comply with new food-and nutrient-based standards. Primary schools were to be

fully compliant by September 2008, and secondary schools by September, 2009. This study analysed children's total dietary intake using data collected pre- and post-implementation of these standards in both primary and middle schools. Using these data a number of key questions can be addressed: (i) what was the impact of school food policy on school lunch? ii) does a child's lunch choice (school or home-packed lunch) impact children's total diet? and (iii) have the implementation of these standards had the same impact on the food intake of children across the socio-economic spectrum?

School Food and Obesity

School food, packed lunches and children's nutrition and health

Dr Michael Nelson – Director of Food and Nutrition, Children's Food Trust

Dr Nelson will discuss the historical changes in school meals provision, legislative impact, the complexity of factors influencing food consumption, and the 'nudge' concept as a way of influencing behaviour. A major part of his argument will be that changes can be made, thus the imposition of standards has affected consumption, for example, increasing the eating of healthy foods and drinks, and decreasing those which are to be discouraged. So, for example, having no salty snacks, no table salt and helping cooks to reduce the amount of salt used, can have a demonstrable effect in both primary and secondary schools. In general the results of introducing standards have all been positive, although some micro-nutrient consumption, such as iron and calcium has been affected negatively. Dr Nelson will argue that the view that children will change their lunchtime habits and go outside school for alternatives is not true, provided that their hunger is sated.

In general a packed lunch alternative is poorer from the nutritional perspective, although it is not a uniform picture, as for example, packed lunches may more often contain fruit and water. Dr Nelson will demonstrate from research that there is a positive effect on learning and standards of behaviour in the post-lunch period, if pupils have had a good school meal. This evidence is important in discussions with head teachers about the budget spent on meals and the dining environment. Evidence from Nova Scotia will be described to illustrate on the impact of taking school meals on reducing excessive weight. Dr Nelson will argue that despite this evidence the soft drinks companies are using every facility at their disposal to try and stop people eating healthily.

In summary the consumption of school meals can be increased amongst the school population, there can be better compliance with standards, dietary choices and intake can be improved, compulsory standards can be shown to be better than guidelines in improving school meal content and there can be improved cognitive function, attainment and growth amongst pupils.

Free school meals: inequalities and impact

Stigmatisation, discrimination and the administration of FSM (Free School Meals)

Sara Bryson, Policy and Business Development Officer - Children North East, and Stephen Crossley, Regional Child Poverty Research and Action Plan Coordinator - Institute for Local Governance, Durham University Business School

The provision of food in schools, especially around the nutritional standards associated with school meals and the often discriminatory and stigmatizing practice for administration Free School Meals, is of concern to researchers and policy makers alike. Increasingly, the issue of food in school, the informal role of teachers in providing it and the perceived lack of food at home is associated with increases in the numbers of children living in poverty.

Children North East and the North East Child Poverty Commission have been working with four partner schools (two primary, two secondary) in the North East region, during the 2012-2013 academic year. Using a participatory approach and drawing on the lived experiences of pupils, staff, parents and governors, we have explored how children from poorer and disadvantaged backgrounds face stigma and discrimination during the school day. To date this work has explored costs of uniforms and school trips; how homework is given out; the need to buy your own resources for coursework; and having aspirations but not understanding how to realize them.

Of particular interest has been the role of food during the school day and how free school meals are administered. Wider research has suggested that ‘segregation in the school hall at lunchtime’ has resulted in the low take up of FSM and our work supports this finding. In one primary school children who pay for school meals, do so when the register is taken in the morning. In a secondary school a card is given to those on free school meals only. Good practice is also explored such as offering revision breakfast clubs for children and young people the morning before an exam to ensure all children have eaten and can concentrate. In some schools, children have told how providing food that isn’t ‘officially’ available (due to nutritional standards and ‘Healthy School’ initiatives) can be obtained, highlighting how pupils are able to negotiate and resist imposed nutritional standards which aren’t to their ‘taste’.

The research project will identify ways that existing policies and practices within schools can be modified to reduce the marginalisation of children receiving FSMs. As with the other stages of the project, children will be at the forefront of these discussions.

The UK nutrition recession: are school meals the answer?

Siobhan O’Neill – Freelance Journalist – specialising in public sector catering

In November 2012 reports highlighted a new kind of recession affecting the worst off in UK society – a nutrition recession. As food prices rise, more of us are watching our weekly food shop bills spiral upwards. Maybe we have made adjustments to the way we shop to accommodate the rise.

But what of those whose incomes are shrinking, who are on benefits or struggling on pay below the living wage? How do they adjust their spending? A study by The Guardian found that even in spite of the massive drive by the government and the DoH under the Public Health Responsibility Deal to improve the nation’s diets, almost a million fewer people were eating their five-a-day than they were two years ago. Conversely sales of ready meals are booming. In supermarkets the cheapest food – often packaged in two-for-one deals - with the highest energy return is high fat and processed and lacking many of the ingredients we would consider essential for a nutritious and healthy diet. Now more than ever the nutritionally balanced school meal – particularly the Free School Meal – could be playing a vital role in the poorest communities, and increasingly head teachers are realising this and acting accordingly. But how can schools ensure they’re helping those who need it the most get their free school meal? Will the incoming Universal Credit changes put the FSM under threat? And should the responsibility always rest with schools?

Siobhan O’Neill is a freelance journalist specialising in the catering industry and in particular writing about public sector catering and school dinners. Over the past seven years she has reported on the changes within school meals and interviewed many involved with their provision from school cooks, to head teachers, caterers, campaigners and MPs. Siobhan runs the website School Food World which aims to report, promote and celebrate best practice in schools catering around the world.

Lunchtime Activities

The cookery demonstration is being led by Sarah Binns, “Let’s Get Cooking” Manager (North East) of the Children’s Food Trust and the power walk by Louisa Ells, Reader in Public Health & Obesity, Teesside University

Please see next page

School meals: the impact

Impact of school meal type on fruit and vegetable consumption in English¹ school children aged 6 to 8 years

Dr Charlotte EL Evans – Lecturer in Nutritional Epidemiology – University of Leeds

Most packed lunches consist of a white bread sandwich with cheese or meat filling, crisps, chocolate biscuit, fruit and a sweetened drink. A review of studies assessing the nutritional content of primary school meals and packed lunches from 1990 to 2007 revealed that school meals are lower in fat, sugar and salt compared with packed lunches; even before the food and nutrient school meal standards were introduced into primary schools. Data collected from more than 2,000 children in 2007 aged 6 to 8 years from across England revealed that energy intake was very similar for each lunch type. However, children taking a packed lunch to school on average had higher sugar and salt intake over the whole day than children having a school meal. Children having a school meal consumed higher levels of protein, fibre and zinc over the whole day than children taking a packed lunch.

Further analysis of this dataset reveals that children having a school meal have higher fruit and vegetable intake over the whole day than children taking a packed lunch and most of this difference is due to an increase in vegetables. There was a suggestion (although not statistically significant) that the reduction in fruit and vegetable consumption seen with increased deprivation was smaller for children having a school meal compared with a packed lunch. Increasing the number of children having a school meal has the potential to decrease inequalities in nutritional intake and status in primary school children.

The Food for Life Partnership: Impact on health, education and sustainability

Amanda Donnelly – Commissioning Manager (North) - Food For Life Partnership at the Soil Association

The Food for Life Partnership (FFLP) is a health and education programme which aims to transform school meals and food education in schools and communities. We aim to give pupils and their families the confidence, skills and knowledge they need to cook, grow and enjoy good food. In essence, we want people to love good quality food. Our approach aims to bring about changes in food culture, tackling wider determinants of healthy food behaviours, and enables changes within settings and at a strategic level through working in partnership with local organisations. Three years of independent evaluation showed the effectiveness of the FFLP programme in achieving its health and well-being targets as well as impacts on education and local economy.

28% increase in primary school age children reporting eating 5-a-day

45% of parents reported eating more fruit & vegetables, changing their shopping patterns at home

Free school meal take up rose by 13 percentage points over 2 years and by 20 percentage points in secondary schools. Over £3 social return on investment for every £1 spent on Food for Life school meal menus, mostly in the form of new jobs in the local economy. Support for development of sustainable food economies.

Researchers also noted that FFLP was:

Effective at re-engaging pupils with learning issues

Attracting high levels of parental engagement

Particularly effective in schools within areas of high social deprivation

A useful tool for improving emotional health and wellbeing and an increase in pupil voice

This presentation will aim to present the evidence of impact of the FFLP programme, and paint the picture behind how and why change is created through FFLP in schools.

¹ In a change from the published programme this study is of English children (replaces London children in the original title)

School meals and social media

Can social media increase school meal uptake?

Karen Fewell – Director - Digital Blonde Ltd

This presentation will be about social media and school meals marketing – the advantages and the hidden pitfalls. After graduating in media production, Karen worked for Glow Productions and InDzine as a Digital Marketing Consultant/Account Director, prior to working with Digital Blonde.

10th April 2013