School Food Standards Pilot
Agenda

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School Food Standards

• It is important that children eat nutritious, tasty food at school as fuel for learning, to help their growth and development and so that they develop healthy eating habits.

• The standards define the foods and drinks that must be provided, which foods are restricted, and those which must not be provided.

• They apply to all food and drink provided to pupils on and off school premises and during an extended school day (up to 6pm).
School Food Standards

The current School Food Standards were developed by the School Food Plan Standards Panel. The Panel undertook to create a clearer set of food-based standards that:

- Provided caterers with a framework on which to build interesting, creative, and nutritionally balanced menus.
- Were less burdensome and operationally cheaper to implement than the previous nutrient-based School Food Standards that were in place.
Background

- **2021-2022** National Food Strategy is published.
  - An independent review commissioned by government to set out a vision and a plan for a better food system.

- **February 2022** Levelling Up White Paper is published.
  - Outlines several initiatives to implement recommendations from the National Food Strategy and strengthen aspects of school food provision.
  - ‘In line with Henry Dimbleby’s recommendations, a joint project will be launched between Department for Education and the Food Standards Agency, to design and test a new approach for local authorities in assuring and supporting compliance with School Food Standards.’
Importance of the pilot

- Healthy food helps children to concentrate, develop, and live a healthy and active life.
- Evidence suggests school lunch is the main meal of the day for many children and school food provides a significant proportion of a child’s overall nutrition.
- In the current economic climate, school food can provide a nutritional safety net for children and families.
About the School Food Standards compliance pilot

The pilot will test the hypothesis that:

- Food Safety Officers carrying out food hygiene inspections are able to ask questions and make observations related to the School Food Standards to identify potential instances of non-compliance with the standards;

and

- Where potential instances of non-compliance have been raised, appropriate teams within local authorities will be able to provide support to schools.
About the School Food Standards compliance pilot

• All food establishments are subject to routine food hygiene inspections. The pilot tests whether we can add a few questions relating to the School Food Standards onto these pre-existing, routine inspections.
• Food Safety Officers will ask site staff questions, check menus, and make observations related to the School Food Standards to identify potential non-compliance.
• Where Food Safety Officers find possible instances of non-compliance, these will be passed to the local authority to consider how they can support schools to make improvements.
Timeline

The pilot will develop across a number of phases:

- **Pilot Discovery Phase**
  - May 2022 - August 2022

- **Pilot Feasibility Study Phase 1**
  - September 2022 - January 2023

- **Pilot Feasibility Study Phase 2**
  - February 2023 - July 2023
The FSA’s Role

• As the only government body that looks solely at food, the FSA has the expertise to offer positive, friendly and unique challenge to help ensure an effective pilot.
• This project is closely aligned with the FSA’s strategy (2022-2027) and it is an important part of how the organisation is helping to deliver a food system that is healthier and more sustainable.
Contact

If you have any questions, we would be happy to answer them.
Please send them to: sfscompliance.pilot@education.gov.uk

Feedback

1. What do you think about the design of the pilot?
2. What do you think local authorities could be doing to respond to any possible non-compliance identified in the School Food Standards check?
Thank you for listening