

THE NEW SCHOOL LUNCH STANDARDS

GENERAL

How do these standards compare with the existing standards?

- The new standards are much tougher than the existing standards. They not only tighten up on the types of food that can be offered in schools but also set out what the nutrient content of a school lunch should be, and importantly, encourage children to make healthier choices.
- The new food-group standards will apply across the school day to breakfast clubs, lunches, tuck shops and vending machines, as well as after-school clubs.

How will the standards be enforced?

- The food standards will be mandatory, which means schools will have to comply legally. If they do not, anyone will be free to complain to the Secretary of State who can issue a direction to the school if necessary.
- In addition, Ofsted will be monitoring a school's approach to healthier eating as part of their regular inspections of schools.
- Parents also will be a key player in monitoring the quality of food at their children's school.

Where can I see the new standards?

- The new standards are available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/healthyliving

Which schools will be covered by the standards?

- Coverage will be as follows:

Primary Schools	Will be required to follow new 'food based' and 'nutrient based' standards.
Secondary Schools	Will be required to follow new 'food based' and 'nutrient based' standards.
Maintained Special Schools	Will be required to follow new 'food based' and 'nutrient based' food standards (implementation September 2009). The regulations do not apply to food provided at maintained special schools after school hours or at the weekend.
Maintained Nursery Schools	Will be required to follow the existing 'food based' standards introduced in 2001.
Non-	Not covered by the standards.

Maintained Nursery Settings – private and voluntary sector.	
Maintained Boarding Schools	Will be required to follow new ‘food based’ and ‘nutrient based’ food standards. The regulations do not apply to food provided at maintained boarding schools after school hours or at weekends.
PRUs	Will be required to follow new ‘food based’ and ‘nutrient based’ food standards.
CTCs	Many CTCs already have healthier eating awards. There will be no requirement for CTCs to adhere to standards in regulations for maintained schools. However, most CTCs have already converted, or will soon be converting to Academy status when the position with academy policy will apply.
Academies	Academies will be expected to apply the same standards as maintained schools, but the obligation will come through their funding agreements rather than legislation.
Non-Maintained Special Schools	Will be required to follow new standards by virtue of paragraph 12(6) of The Education Non-maintained Special Schools 1999 regs.
Children’s Homes	Not covered by these standards.

Why do maintained nursery schools not need to follow the new standards?

DfES is currently consulting on The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which will place on providers a specific welfare requirement that 'children are provided with nutritious food and drink to meet their needs'. The EYFS will also include good practice for providers. Providers will be directed to a range of information about nutritional standards, including the updated Caroline Walker Trust guidance on which the new school meals standards are modelled.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has provided a grant to the Caroline Walker Trust, to update its guidance “*Eating Well for Under-5s in Child Care*”, associated menu planner software and training pack, to ensure these materials are brought into line with current nutritional recommendations (e.g. new salt targets).

DfES is currently considering whether it can build on this work and develop new guidance materials for food and drink in early years settings.

The DfES main procurement guidance contains advice on sourcing ingredients using local suppliers. The guidance is being further developed following discussions with the National Audit Office.

- The Department has in place a 'Food Procurement Action Plan', which sets out how we will address the objectives of the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative. Action taken has mainly been through promoting good practice by publishing case studies on Teachernet, and promoting PSFPI objectives through other work on school meals, including through the commitments made in the Healthy Living Blueprint, and the Secretary of State's determination to improve school meals.