

to **Headteachers**date 1st May 2007**All Schools**

Dear Headteacher

WIRRAL SCHOOL FOOD REFERENCE GROUP (WSFRG)

I am writing to you as Chair of the 'Wirral School Food Reference Group' to update you on the work we have been doing, and will continue to do in support of school meal provision on Wirral.

After reading that opening sentence you may already be asking yourself some questions like:

Wirral School Food what?

Who are they? – never heard of them!

So in this letter I have set out to try and answer these, along with others.

As Vice Chair of Governors at Gayton Primary School I am aware how Headteachers are bombarded with information from various sources, in various forms, and what an impossible task it is to try to absorb it all. So I will try to keep this as concise and simple as I can and by the end of it hope you have a better understanding of the work of the WSFRG and its future objectives.

Q Why has the WSFRG been formed?

A In answer to the announcement by Government in 2005 of a new Standards Fund Grant available to support their commitment to improve school meals – better known as the 'Jamie Oliver Money!' – officially called 'School Meals Grant 105a' which is ring fenced at LEA (not school) level, and that councils should establish a Lead Team to decide how best this new funding should be spent – Wirral's Lead Team is the WSFRG.

Q Who are the members of the WSFRG?

A List attached as an Appendix

Q What has WSFRG done so far?

A £248,000 grant for 2005/06 has been spent on training all grades of kitchen staff in 'Providing a Healthier School Meal Service City and Guilds 7101 Vocational Award Level 1', working in partnership with Wirral Met College, who delivered the training during Summer Holidays 2006.

This invitation was extended to all school meal service providers on Wirral and over 400 staff successfully took up the challenge.

The balance of the first year's grant funded the purchase of colour-coded chopping boards with accompanying sets of knives which were delivered into all Wirral school meal kitchens in support of Government's initiatives to increase 'freshly' prepared foods in line with the new nutritional food based standards, introduced in September 2006.

Newsflash

Press announcement by Education Secretary Alan Johnson (September 2006) that additional funding will be made available from 2008-2011 to subsidise healthy ingredients after the current three year transitional fund runs out in 2007/08.

Q WSFRG Long Term Strategy – where do we go from here?

A With this announcement of sustained funding extended to 2011 the WSFRG decided to spend each year's allocation on improving food in all schools in Wirral, with an apportion of the grant to be retained for the generic promotion/marketing of school meals, as we are aware of the continued decline in uptake since the introduction of new nutritional standards for school lunches/falling roles and we will be looking at ways to try and reverse the trend.

Q How much money do we have?

A 2006/07 grant is £348,000
Continued funding through to 2011.

Q How can my School Meal Provider Access the Funding?

A WSFRG would like to extend an invitation to all school meal providers on Wirral via their headteachers/governing bodies to 'tap' into this, and this is how you can do it.

We feel that to support WSFRG's long term strategy of 'improving school food', a service provider should submit an Action Plan on how they will achieve this objective to the Chair of the group, Alison Mountney, by **Monday 18th June 07**.

Contact details are:

Alison Mountney
Vice Chair of Governors
c/o Gayton Primary School
Gayton Road
Heswall
Wirral CH60 8PZ

e-mail address mountneya@mail.com

Unless your school meal service provider submits a written Action Plan by the specified date they will not be able to access this funding. Action Plan Guidelines are attached for your reference.

Q What happens once my 'Action Plan' is submitted?

A WSFRG will evaluate each plan and confirm if their criteria for access to the funding will be met.

An invitation to each successful service provider will be extended to attend a meeting of the WSFRG to progress their submissions. No Action Plans can be submitted after the closing date – **Monday 18th June 2007**.

The decisions of the WSFRG are final.

Q How will funding be allocated?

A Funding will be split equally between the number of schools each service provider is responsible for and given back to them to implement their WSFRG authorised Action Plan.

Q How will Service Providers' Action Plans be monitored?

A To ensure the allocated funding is being spent appropriately by school meal service providers, ongoing monitoring/auditing of Action Plans will be carried out by members of WSFRG who have the authority to suspend access to future existing funding at any time.

Q What do I do now?

A **If your school meals service is provided through a Service Agreement by Metro Catering, I have been advised they will be submitting an Action Plan on behalf of all the schools they are responsible for.**

If your school provides its own school meals service (in-house) you may wish to discuss the contents of this letter with the person responsible for your meals and submit an Action Plan.

If your school meals provider is a private contractor please ensure this letter is passed to the manager responsible for your school.

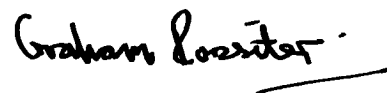
Well that's what the Wirral School Food Reference Group long term strategy is and all members of the group agree this is a good opportunity for School Meals Providers on Wirral to access additional funding to support the delivery of healthier school meals.

May I close by thanking you for taking the time to read this correspondence and if it has raised any further questions (which I have not covered) please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely



Alison Mountney
Chair Wirral School Food Reference Group



Graham Rossiter
Principal Liaison Officer
Children & Young People's Department

Members of the Wirral School Food Reference Group

Our Terms of Reference/Aims of the Group

- To support the delivery of healthier school meals in all maintained schools on Wirral via standards funds.
- To sustain the hot school meal service on Wirral.

Alison Mountney Chair	Parent Governor - Gayton Primary
David Armstrong	Senior Inspector - Children & Young People's Dept, Wirral Council
Graham Rossiter	Principal Liaison Officer - Children & Young People's Dept, Wirral Council
Steve Dainty	Headteacher - St Joseph's RC Primary, Birkenhead
Mary Walker	Headteacher - Portland Primary, Claughton
Hilary Ryan	Headteacher – Park Primary
Pat Young	Headteacher (Secondary) – Upton Hall School
Ken Crilly	Branch Officer – UNISON
Sister Francis	Governor - St Laurence's RC Primary, Birkenhead
Ken Gardner	Governor - St Laurence's RC Primary, Birkenhead
Pat Landsborough	Governor - Bidston Avenue Primary and Park High School
Trish Barnes	Health Promoting Schools Co-ordinator
Phil Baines	Health Promoting Specialist (Food and Health) Wirral PCT
Tony Newman	Headteacher – Stanley School, Thingwall

Action Planning & Monitoring Toolkit to Support Applications for Funding

Key Aim: To support the delivery of healthier school meals in all maintained schools in Wirral			
KEY OBJECTIVES:	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	AREAS OF SUPPORT	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Improve the quality of ingredients within existing food types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taster sessions • School Council-led campaigns • Nutritional analysis • Information Workshops for Pupils and Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Schools Team • School Food Reference Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of improved ingredients through analysis and/or procurement details • Evidence of raised awareness amongst parents and pupils
Reduce the number of 'processed' foods available for school meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taster sessions • School Council-led campaigns • Nutritional analysis • Information Workshops for Pupils and Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Schools Team • School Food Reference Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of reduced amount of processed foods through analysis and/or procurement details • Evidence of raised awareness amongst parents and pupils
Supporting Aim: To sustain a hot school meal service in Wirral			
SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	AREAS OF SUPPORT	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Continue to highlight/make available 'healthy eating' training as required, to all school catering staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight City & Guilds 7101 Level 1 Training (Award in providing a healthier school meals service) to be delivered • Continue to highlight/make available training activities for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HPS Newsletter • School Food Reference Group • Healthy Schools Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness through training • Good practice shared and accessed through Healthy Schools' newsletter and website

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share good practice via individual schools' newsletters, Healthy Schools newsletter and website. 		
Improve awareness of Free School Meal eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a promotional campaign to raise awareness and promote benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People Operational Group • Healthy Schools Team • Information on Iwish system • Principal Liaison Officer, Children & Young People's Dept, Wirral Council • One Stop Shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional campaign / event ran • Pilot campaign ran • Evidence of increased FSM uptake
Run a promotional campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of school meals, specifically hot school meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional campaign within school, or school cluster • Parent workshops • Tasting session for pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Schools Team • Catering Providers • School Food Reference Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of sustained uptake in school meals • Evidence of sustained uptake in hot school meals • Promotional campaign ran alongside tasting sessions and parent workshops