

From: Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

To: Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee – 21 January 2016

Subject: The Impact of Universal Infant Free School Meals

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

Summary: There is a legal duty on all state-funded schools in England, including academies and free schools to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 from September 2014. This report explores the cost, progress, challenges and impact of UIFSM.

Recommendation(s):

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to Note the report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The School Food Plan, published by Henry Dimbleby and John Vincent in July 2013, presented evidence that free school meals would lead to positive improvements in:
- health
 - attainment
 - social cohesion
 - helping families with the cost of living
- 1.2 The School Food Plan recommended a series of actions to transform what children eat at school and how they learn about food including:
- put cooking into the curriculum
 - introduce food based standards
 - food and nutrition training for head teachers
 - a phased roll out of free school meals for all primary school children, beginning with the local authorities with the highest percentage of children already eligible for free school meals
- 1.3 The review found that, in pilots where all children have been given a free school dinner:
- children were found to be on average 2 months ahead of their peers elsewhere
 - around 2% more children reached target levels in Maths and English at Key Stage 1; while at Key Stage 2 the impact on achievement of between 3% and 5% was a bigger improvement than the 3.6% boost that followed the introduction of a compulsory literacy hour in 1998
 - academic improvements were most marked among children from less affluent families

- there was a 23% increase in the number of children eating vegetables at lunch and an 18% drop in those eating crisps

1.4 The result was for The Children and Families Act 2014 to place a legal duty on all state-funded schools in England, including academies and free schools to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 from September 2014.

1.5 The responsibility for school catering is delegated to all schools and academies. Governing Bodies can make their own decisions and changes to provision without the need to consult or inform KCC Client Services.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 *UIFSM Round 1 Capital Funding 2014/15*

The government allocated £150 million of capital funding in the 2014/15 financial year to support the rollout of UIFSM

National		KENT	
Local Authorities	£102.7m	Kent CC	£2.7m
Voluntary Aided	£26.4	Kent VA	£0.5m
Academies	£20.8	KentAcademies	Unknown

2.2 Academies were able to bid to the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund (ACMF) to improve their facilities; an element of the available capital funding was added to the ACMF pot for 2014 to 2015 for this purpose.

2.3 *Kent Projects Undertaken*

In January 2014, KCC asked schools to complete an online survey to enable an assessment as to how best to allocate the funds. Several schools raised concerns that their dining rooms were not able to cope with the additional meal take up. Some schools who rent village halls to serve the meals would have additional pressures on their budgets due to extended rental fees.

2.4 On 21 March 2014 the KCC Schools Funding Forum agreed a programme and a business case which were later presented to Cabinet Committee and a programme approved.

2.5 KCC would make decisions based on local knowledge of schools and results from the survey undertaken to try and make best use of the monies available. Priority was given to:

- schools with no onsite cooking facilities
- schools with no local primary school able to provide for them
- infant only schools
- a project which relieves an additional problem for another school
- the outcome will have significant impact on service improvement
- the project does not require planning permission (due to Government imposed timescales)

the schools management team are supportive of the initiative and willing to contribute to necessary work outside of the grant conditions

3. Approved Programme August 2014

3.1 The 12 schools listed below had no facilities and through this process were given brand new on site production kitchens. Many of these will now be able to cook for other local schools.

- Maypole Primary School, Dartford
- St Albans Rd Infants, Dartford
- Shears Green Infants School, Northfleet
- Minster CEP School, Thanet
- Bridge & Patribourne CEP School, Canterbury
- Mundella Primary School, Folkestone
- Otford Primary School, Sevenoaks
- St Michaels CEP School, Tenterden
- Riverhead Infants School, Sevenoaks
- Palace Wood Primary School, Maidstone
- St Martins CEP School, Folkestone
- Sellindge Primary School, Ashford

3.2 Approximately 108 schools received equipment such as ovens, refrigerators or mobile heated trollies to support schools to meet the UIFSM initiative.

3.3 In addition, an allocation from the Planned Enhancement Budget for 2014/15 was used to deliver 6 major projects to upgrade existing kitchen ventilation and equipment:

- Priory Fields School , Dover
- The Oaks Infant School, Sittingbourne
- Swalecliffe CP School, Whitstable
- St Johns CEP Primary, Sevenoaks
- Langton Green Primary, Tunbridge Wells
- Madginford Park Infants, Maidstone

3.4 All 6 ventilation and 12 kitchen projects were completed and operational in September 2014.

4. UIFSM Round 2 Capital Funding 2015/16

4.1 Following the implementation of the UIFSM initiative (i.e. Round 1) that every child in KS1 in state-funded schools will receive a free school lunch from September 2014, on the 16th October 2014, the Department announced that they would be making an additional £20m of capital funding available for new projects aimed at enhancing kitchen and dining facilities for local authorities to bid for. This is as a result of the Department advising that there is evidence that there have been a small number of schools which have on-going implementation challenges that they have been unable to address.

4.2 In 2015 the funding was awarded for individual projects. KCC applied for sixteen and were successful in five:

St Stephens Infants	Canterbury	Servery conversion to kitchen	£186,917
Downs View Infants	Ashford	Pod kitchen	£235,585
Ellington Infants	Thanet	Pod kitchen	£249,000

New Ash Green Primary	Sevenoaks	Servery conversion to kitchen	£209,503
Hextable Primary	Sevenoaks	Servery conversion to kitchen	£193,894
Total			£1,074,899

4.3 The Planned Enhancement budget allocated to improve ventilation in kitchens is £500,000. This also includes replacing old Chester ovens as these do not comply with current gas safety regulations. The ventilation improvements are ongoing to bring kitchens up to current standards so are not directly as a result of UIFSM but schools cooking high numbers due to UIFSM were prioritised. This funding has upgraded ventilation in 7 kitchens:

- The Anthony Roper Primary
- Borough Green Primary
- Capel Primary
- Darenth Primary
- Dunton Green Primary
- Higham Primary
- Stone St Mary's CE Primary

4.4 All these projects were awarded to Kier Construction under the Scape contract. All projects were completed and operational for September 2015.

5 Revenue Funding

5.1 Schools are paid funding at a flat rate of £2.30 for each meal taken by newly eligible pupils. Therefore schools will receive £437 per annum for each pupil that receives meals and is eligible for UIFSM. UIFSM numbers can be measured, from October 14 as the schools census has included a new indicator to identify pupils that have newly become eligible for a UIFSM.

6. Small Schools Transitional Funding

6.1 This funding was said to be a one off in 2014 for schools with a roll of up to and including 150 pupils. Each eligible school received an amount per eligible pupil or a lump sum of £3,000 whichever is the greater. Then in April 2015 a further amount of £2300 was allocated to schools who met these criteria.

7. UIFSM provision in Kent

7.1 *Initial Provision September 2014*

On day one of the introduction of UIFSM every school in Kent offered hot meals to all Key Stage One pupils with the exception of Wilmington Primary and Benenden CE Primary.

7.2 Wilmington Primary as an academy successfully bid for funding and opened their new production kitchen June 2015. From September 14 to June 15 they provided a transported service.

7.3 Benenden CE Primary offered pupils a hot service 2 or 3 days per week and cold on the other days. The Headteacher raised concerns regarding their lack of facilities to be able to comply with UIFSM requirements.. The

Headteacher requested funding for additional supervision. A UIFSM Advisor representing the DfE visited site and agreed funding of £64,048.85 to install a pod dining room. Unfortunately once KCC carried out further feasibility investigations, the project did not go ahead due to lack of space. Benenden also narrowly missed out on small school transitional funding. However, the school has been successful for the Priority School Building Programme (Round 2) and subject to final agreement with the EfA, they should have a new school within the next couple of years.

- 7.4 Godinton Primary - during July 2014 there was some media interest around provision of UIFSM at Godinton Primary. The Rt Hon Damian Green MP wrote to Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education & Health Reform. The Headteacher was concerned about the ability of the kitchen and dining hall to cope.
- 7.5 Applying the criteria agreed with the School Funding Forum, Godinton was not chosen to receive a major kitchen extension project but were supplied with additional kitchen equipment. It was agreed the kitchen was small, but had sufficient equipment to cook for the estimated 250 pupils to be served in September 2014. Following intervention from the DfE an additional storage pod was offered but declined by the school as they felt it would be more cost effective to wait until they converted to an Academy and then apply for a higher level of funding.

8. Current Provision September 2015

- 8.1 There are still approximately 115 schools without onsite production kitchens. 42 of these have over 200 pupils on roll so are likely to be transporting in over 100 meals each day. Some schools transport in over 300 meals on a daily basis. These servery schools rely on the good will of other local schools to allow their kitchens to be used to transport out meals to schools without kitchens. Many schools would like to have their own kitchens but without funding this is impossible.
- 8.2 Some schools may choose to offer a packed lunch on occasions such as a school trip out but the requirement is that they should be working towards a hot meal service on a regular basis.
- 8.3 The Client Services team manage a County let framework agreement. There are 5 different service providers covering 212 primary schools and 1 secondary school. This contract expires 31 July 2016. Client Services are currently working on proposals to provide the future service from the Total Facilities Management Contracts which are already in place and awarded to Amey, Skanska and Kier.
- 8.4 119 other schools purchase a catering support package from Client Services. Therefore approximately 262 schools manage their own school meals service with no direct involvement from the Authority.

9. Meal Take Up

- 9.1 The Government's target for UIFSM is for 87% of Reception and KS1 pupils to be having a hot nutritious meal at lunchtime.

9.2 At the start of April each year schools and academies are asked to submit their annual meal numbers for the previous financial year. This is not mandatory so not all schools respond. For April 14 to March 15, 294 schools responded (208 framework + 86 non framework). UIFSM was introduced part way through this year, Sept 14 so the percentage take up of FSM is distorted.

When the survey is issued in April 2016, the questions will be changed to separate out benefits based FSM from UIFSM.

- April 13/March 14 average daily take up = 35.6%
- April 14/March 15 average daily take up = 40%

9.3 The table below shows the numbers for July 14 compared with September 14 for the schools who had new kitchens installed. This shows some significant increases when meals are cooked on site.

	July 14	Sept 14	% Increase
Bridge & Patricbourne CEP	106	183	73%
Maypole Primary	92	188	105%
Minster Primary (Thanet)	476	766	61%
Mundella Primary	100	115	15%
Oxford Primary	97	167	72%
Palace Wood Primary	92	138	50%
Riverhead Infant	110	271	146%
Sellindge Primary	26	45	73%
Shears Green Infant	99	336	241%
St Albans Road Infant	101	146	45%
St Martin's CEP Folkestone	30	99	226%
St Michael's CEP Tenterden	39	57	46%

9.4 Please find attached UIFSM take up numbers from the school census October 2014 - October 2015. Take up varies from 100% down to 40%

10. UIFSM support

UIFSM Toolkit

10.1 This toolkit is designed to be used as an initial reference point. It contains useful information and links to expert organisations that can help. It also provides important information on the targeted implementation support service commissioned by the government, which has now been awarded to the Children's Food Trust and the Lead Authority for Catering in Education (LACA).

10.2 Targeted Implementation Support

£9.6m was available nationally to provide targeted advice and guidance to those schools most in need of help. To increase meal take up, the Government awarded The Children's Food Trust a contract to support schools across the South East. Client Services are working with CFT to deliver this support on a local basis. In Year One September 14, Client Services were funded £38,000 to support 49 targeted schools at level 4. In Year Two, September 15 Client Services supported 24 schools at level 4 and 7 at level 3. We expect to be funded £39,000 for this work.

- 10.3 The improvement programme identified eligible schools as facing the most significant challenges and low meal take up
- Level 1: Advice service
 - Level 2: Handholding service (telephone based)
 - Level 3: ‘What works well’ visit
 - Level 4: Face to face advice and support
- 10.4 In addition to visits and a report from Client Services, these schools also had free access to:
- a visit from The Craft Guild of Chefs
 - a What Works Well visit
 - Food for Life Partnership “Quality Day”
 - CFT menu checking service
 - Marketing support from Elygra Marketing. Most schools chose to receive a mixed box of generic materials
 - 1 Year free membership to Lead Association of Caterers in Education (LACA)
 - 1 Year free licence code for the Children’s Food Trust Learning Network

11. Make School Meals Count Project

11.1 In an effort to ensure those pupils in Key Stage 2 also benefit from a hot school lunch and to retain those in Key Stage 1 who were moving to Key Stage 2 in September 2015, KCC was approached by CFT to offer the Food Dudes Dining Experience programme in junior schools. This involved training staff, pupil prizes, programme videos and dining room materials. After meeting with the CFT and colleagues in Public Health it was agreed the cost to KCC to deliver this project was prohibitive but if in the future funding was available, KCC would prefer to target the interventions to the areas of greatest need across our County.

11.2 Checklist for Head Teachers

This is a checklist of all the things that work well at schools. There are specific actions that improve food culture in schools and increase take-up of school dinners. The checklist is designed to be printed out and pinned up in the school office and in the school kitchen.

12. Challenges for Schools Following the Implementation of UIFSM

12.1 Catering for Special Diets

Increased take-up may mean catering for a broader range of special diets. In the pilots, as take-up increased, so did provision for special diets on medical and religious grounds. This can present a challenge in some situations, but many caterers are experienced at ensuring their menus reflect the cultural and religious make-up of schools, and providing for those with allergies. Client Services offer schools training sessions via CPD Online and qualifications in these subjects.

12.2 Pupil Premium

Concerns were raised that as all KS1 pupils would be eligible for free meals that parents would not apply for benefits-based free meals and therefore the

schools would not receive the Pupil Premium funding allocations. The then Schools Minister David Laws recommend that schools get parents to complete a standard declaration in respect of eligibility for Free School Meals. KCC senior management supported the recommendation and encouraged schools to use the Model Registration Form.

When analysing the number of pupils entitled to benefit based free school meals the figures show for pupils in Reception in 13/14 moved up to Year 1 in 14/15 (the first year of UIFSM) the benefit based FSM entitlement increased by 2%.

For pupils in Year 1 in 13/14 moving up to Year 2 in 14/15 the benefit based FSM entitlement reduced by 1.3%.

For pupils in Year 2 in 13/14 moving up to Year 3 in 14/15 the benefit based FSM entitlement reduced by 1.8%

As the figures for the pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, not influenced by UIFSM also reduced by 1.2% and 1.5% the conclusion is that there is no significant difference between the drop off in primary and secondary and the reduction in free school meals was due to the improvement in the economy.

12.3 *Light Equipment*

For those schools in the County framework agreement, the contractors purchased additional plates, bowls, cutlery, cooking utensils, transport boxes etc. Schools that make their own arrangements for school meals may have had to negotiate within their own contractor or purchase additional equipment themselves.

12.4 *Transported Meal Service*

Due to increase meal numbers the contractors had to purchase additional transport boxes. The delivery schedules needed to be adjusted to take account of the extra time needed loading and unloading vehicles. In some cases the transport costs have increased as double runs had to be introduced due to extra sittings or size of vehicles used.

12.5 *Kitchen Equipment*

Due to school kitchens now catering for higher meal numbers there will be a greater strain put on existing kitchen facilities and equipment such as ovens, steamers, refrigerators, dish washers etc. Where KCC is responsible, the Fixed Wiring Testing and the Gas Catering Equipment and Kitchen Gas Installations Annual inspection and service is funded centrally.

12.6 All kitchen decoration and equipment repairs are a delegated school responsibility. With school budgets being under financial pressures, schools with kitchens are sometimes reluctant to spend their budget on the kitchen when they see other areas in the school as taking priority. Some schools are choosing not to make a repair which causes issues for the catering contractor. For example by not repairing a dishwasher, the plates and cutlery etc all need to be washed by hand which increases the workload but may also risk customer safety.

12.7 A lack of adequate maintenance to the structure of the premises and equipment can result in -

- inadequate temperature control which could cause failure to cook or store food to the correct temperature

- cleaning becoming more difficult and result in a build-up of food debris
 - defective and poorly maintained equipment, fixtures and fittings which can result in the physical contamination of food
 - pests may enter the premises
 - an Environmental Health Officer will serve an improvement notice or prohibition order on the proprietor of the business
 - an accident occurring
- 12.8 Some schools will use engineers or Caretakers who are not familiar with the type of equipment in our school kitchen. This may lead to delays or more costly repairs or unnecessary replacements.
- 12.9 In September 2015 schools were informed any mixer without guarding should be replaced with one which is fully guarded as per the PUWER regulations 1998. The cost to the school is approximately £1500.
- 12.10 There is currently no incentive for one school to cook for another school. When schools are awarding new contracts they should be looking for contractors to help with the costs of kitchen equipment repairs and replacements.

13. OFSTED

- 13.1 Under the new Common Inspection Framework, from September 2015, Ofsted will inspect how “children and learners keep themselves healthy, including through healthy eating”. As part of this, inspectors will look at “the food on offer and visit the canteen to see the atmosphere and culture in the dining space and the effect this has on pupils’ behaviour.” Inspectors will also look at the “breadth and balance of the curriculum, of which practical cookery is now a part.”
- 13.2 *Kent School Impact Assessment Online Survey October 2014*
- 56 schools responded
 - 56 were providing a hot free meal every day to all KS1 pupils
 - 41 said since September 2014 the lunchtime takes an increased amount of time
 - 15 said the timetable had been adjusted to accommodate the extra time lunch service needed
 - 1 was serving hot meals in a classroom (Tunstall CofE)
 - 25 said they had had to increase the hours or numbers of Midday Meal Supervisors
 - 33 said other than staffing costs, the school budget had been used for items relating to UIFSM e.g. additional kitchen equipment, furniture, plates or cutlery
- 13.3 When asked what positive impact UIFSM had had most said it was too early to tell. Other positive comments were:
- children trying new foods
 - potential to become a more sociable experience for all
 - children are eating healthier
 - quality of food is better than some packed lunches
 - improving their table manners

- feedback suggests that parents are very happy with the initiative
- lunch times are calmer, more organised and more enjoyable
- children are returning to class eager and ready to learn in the afternoons
- increase in children in KS2 having a school dinner
- children trying new foods - parents report they try new foods at home too
- free lunch - less parents in debt to the school
- 0.4% increase in attendance

13.4 Less positive comments included:

- amount of food wastage has increased dramatically
- extended time needed for setting up tables and benches before lunch and cleaning floor afterwards means the time that the hall can be available for other curriculum activities like PE has been affected
- timeframe to implement was unrealistic
- Have had to move to all children 'block-booking' their school dinners for a whole week rather than choosing day-by-day. This has disappointed many families and led to fewer KS2 pupils choosing school meals.
- large input from teaching, leadership and support staff has been involved on a daily basis to try to ensure that pupils are fed within the lunch hour and back in class in time for afternoon lessons
- children's playtime has decreased because many children are unable to eat in the time allotted
- FSM applications are reduced
- whilst a good idea, there has been no real thought about the logistics and man-management time this has taken (disproportionate to the benefits) when we should be focused on teaching and learning
- admin time (which costs the school) has been far more taken up with the meals admin now
- there was no reason to introduce this headline grabbing initiative

13.4 *What schools need to do to improve take up of UIFSM*

The role of the head teacher is vital in leading the change: only the head teacher has the power to organise all aspects of the school required to implement UIFSM.

- concentrate on the things children care about; good food, attractive environment and time to socialise
- adopt and refine the 'whole-school approach'
- ensure school food is an integral part of the whole school day
- all stakeholders must be engaged in the service; involving parents, school cooks, midday supervisors, children, school staff, catering providers and governors
- promote good behaviour in the dining room so it's a positive experience for the young pupils, in an attractive, bright space
- regular promotion and theme days
- menu in words and pictures - identity / brand
- ensure the pupils are able to see the food on offer
- easy to eat food
- link lunchtime with growing clubs and cooking in school
- ensuring a good flow through the dining hall from queueing to be served, to the waste station
- change to round tables and free standing chairs
- use proper plates and bowls

- have colourful table cloths
- staggered lunchtimes
- rotate the year group sittings
- pre-ordering = reduced time queuing = less waste
- teachers eat with pupils,
- parents and family invited in to eat lunch
- active encouragement of trial portions
- praise and recognition for new food eaten
- lunchtime buddies supporting younger pupils - role models
- the 'golden table', Friday table or top table
- customer care training for lunchtime supervisors and catering teams
- work with the school council or school nutrition action group (SNAG) to support improvements to the lunchtime service

14. The Future of UIFSM

- 14.1 The Prime Minister, Mr David Cameron has pledged to save Universal Infant Free School Meals in the November Spending Review. During a question and answer session at Prime Minister's Questions on 28 October 2015, The PM said "I'm immensely proud that it was a government I lead that introduced this policy. I'm proud of what we've done and we'll be keeping it." (Source - Lead Association for CAtering in Education (LACA))
- 14.2 The industry is calling for a university-led piece of research to be commissioned to measure the effectiveness of UIFSM, based on health, attainment and economics.

15. Other Issues Affecting the School Meals Service 2014/15

- 15.1 *Revised Standards for School Food*
The new school food standards became a legal requirement in January 2015. They created a clearer, simpler set of food-based standards for school food in place of the previous nutrient-based standards.
- 15.2 Current health status of children and young people:
- only 10% boys and 7% girls aged 11-18 years eat 5-A-DAY fruit and vegetables
 - intakes of sugar, saturated fat and salt are too high
 - intakes of fibre are too low
 - low intakes of oily fish
 - intakes of certain vitamins and minerals are often too low, particularly in secondary school-aged girls
 - more than a fifth of children are either overweight or obese by the time they join reception class, increasing to a third in Year 6
 - type II diabetes appearing in children
 - poor dental health in many young children
 - young children and teenaged girls particularly at risk of iron deficiency
- 15.3 The new standards aim to ensure that food provided is healthy, balanced and nutritious. To provide pupils with an appropriate amount of the energy and nutrients they need during the school day and help develop healthy eating habits.

16. School Workforce Development Professional Standards

16.1 This has created a set of commonly-accepted professional standards, detailing the required competences, responsibility and skills expected of school catering staff in different positions.

17. Food Allergen Labelling Regulations

17.1 New food allergen regulations came into force on 13th December 2014. The legislation requires caterers to provide allergy information on food sold unpackaged in any catering outlet such as a breakfast clubs, tuck shop, dining hall or canteen. There are also changes to existing legislation on labelling allergenic ingredients in pre-packed foods.

18. Recommendation(s)

18.1 Recommendation(s): The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report.

20. Contact details

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