



**Paper for Information: FSA Update on Activities  
related to Maternal and Child  
Nutrition**

**Agenda Item: 6**

Please see attached paper for information.

## FSA - SCHOOL BASED INITIATIVES

### 1. *Dish it Up!* CD-ROM

- The Agency through its Food Choice R & D programme funded the development and evaluation of an interactive CD-ROM targeted at 11-12 year olds and intended to motivate them to eat more healthily. The background to the development work and the evaluation closely involved the target group of 11-12 year olds. Three free copies of the CD-ROM have been sent to every secondary school in the UK. Schools thereafter can freely copy the CD-ROM within the Agency's copyright rules. A Welsh language version of Dish it Up! has been commissioned by the National Assembly for Wales. Several thousand copies have been given to the National Governors Council for distribution to school governors on our behalf.
- Further evaluation of Dish it Up! has been commissioned since the CD has been out in schools for a full year. A report of the evaluation is expected towards the end of 2004.
- International contacts (such as WHO) have also requested a copy of the CD. It has received a commendation by the British Interactive Media Association in the Training and Home Learning category. A poster about Dish it Up! was presented at an EU Forum on Eating at School in Strasbourg in November 2003 where a number of copies of the CD-ROM were requested by international delegates (and have been since).
- An article featuring some areas of FSA school-based work will appear in MODUS (the magazine for teachers of D & T) in August 2004. A copy of Dish it Up! will be inserted into each copy of MODUS (6000 in all).

### 2. FSA web site: Development of teacher support materials from *Five a Day the Bash Street Way*

- *Five a day the Bash Street Way* was a pilot project funded through the N09 Food Choice R & D programme. It tested the efficacy of an intervention consisting of a whole school approach to encouraging primary school children to eat more fruit and vegetables. A small but significant increase in fruit consumption by the children in the two intervention schools was achieved compared with the two control schools. Material developed for the intervention based on the Bash Street Kids cartoon characters has been adapted for dissemination on FSA web site with permission from D C Thompson who hold the copyright to the characters. Material is on [www.food.gov.uk/interactivetools/educational/bashstreetdiet/](http://www.food.gov.uk/interactivetools/educational/bashstreetdiet/)
- A poster about Five a day the Bash Street Way was presented at an EU Forum on Eating at School in Strasbourg in November 2003.
- Five a day the Bash St Way will feature as one of the items in an article in MODUS (see above).

### **3. FSA web site: Development of school lunch time club support materials from *Be Smart***

- *Be Smart* was a project funded through the N09 Food Choice R & D programme. It tested the efficacy of 3 different interventions: nutrition education alone, physical activity alone or a combination of the two approaches to prevent the development of obesity in primary school children, compared to a control group of children. The interventions were delivered through lunchtime clubs at schools. The Agency is adapting some of the support material for the Agency web site where it will be placed in 2004.

### **4. Wired for Health web site (Healthy Schools Programme) dissemination of fruit tuck shops in primary schools booklet**

- A randomised controlled trial to test the effectiveness of fruit tuck shops to increase fruit consumption by primary school children was carried out under N09. The researchers used experiences gained during the process evaluation of the trial to write a booklet for schools on how to set up and run a fruit tuck shop. FSA Wales has published this in English and Welsh. It is now available on the Healthy Schools Programme Wired for Health web site at <http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/teaching/nut/fact.html>  
The booklet was extensively used by Grab 5!, a Sustain-funded project (see p.5).

### **5. Getting to Grips with Grub Food-Related Knowledge and Practical Skills**

- If young people are to eat more healthily they need to understand what constitutes a healthy diet and have the practical skills to put this knowledge into practice. The Agency convened a cross-Government group, which included DfES, DH, Health Development Agency (HDA), Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Design And Technology Association (DATA), Children & Young People's Unit, and Planet Science to collaborate on this initiative. The aim was to compare the skills and abilities of 14-16 year olds against a range of food-related core competencies, which have been identified under the main themes of:
  - *Diet and Health*
  - *Consumer awareness*
  - *Food preparation and handling skills*
  - *Food hygiene and safety*
- Research Works, a market research company, was commissioned to carry out qualitative fieldwork with focus groups and friendship pairs of young people from the target age group. The report of this work is available on the Agency web site at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/competencyevaluation.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/competencyevaluation.pdf)
- A joint FSA/DfES public consultation '*Getting to Grips with Grub*', carried out in late 2003, sought views on the nature of the competencies identified by the steering group and means of delivering them locally in a sustainable way. The consultation document can be viewed at

[www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/grubgrips.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/grubgrips.pdf) and the summary of responses can be found at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/gtgwgsummresponse.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/gtgwgsummresponse.pdf). The Agency has also sought the views of young people through the National Children's Bureau and the report is available on the Agency web site at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ncbgrub.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ncbgrub.pdf)

- The core competencies were taken forward with teachers at a joint FSA/Design And Technology Association (DATA) workshop held at the Agency in November 2003. The proceedings have been published on FSA and DATA web sites. [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/gggresearchpaper20.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/gggresearchpaper20.pdf)
- The competencies are also being taken forward at a local level by piloting and evaluation of out-of-school-hours cookery clubs.

## 6. OUT-OF-HOURS LEARNING COOKERY CLUBS (*Cook It*)

- ContinYou (formerly Education Extra, a charity that promotes out-of-school-hours learning) has been commissioned to pilot and evaluate this activity with lower secondary school aged children. Cookery clubs ('Food citizenship') will include associated skills such as budgeting, meal planning, shopping, reading labels and preparing the food in a hygienic manner as well as practical cookery. If successful, the results will help provide guidance to what works that can be adopted more widely. The project is being piloted in Stockton, North Tyneside and Brighton and finishes mid-January 2005. If successful, ContinYou will prepare a 'How to' guide based on the results, which will be disseminated on ContinYou and FSA web sites.

## 7. *Starting Early* – first OFSTED/FSA survey of food-related good practice in primary schools and early year learning settings

- The first ever survey of good practice related to a 'whole school' approach to food and nutrition has been conducted jointly by OFSTED and FSA. OFSTED (with funds from DfES) provided HM Inspector time to visit primary schools, and early year settings such as nursery schools, Sure Start schemes, day care nurseries etc. The FSA funded nutritionists to accompany the inspectors. The survey examined school activity relating to food in the school environment including that in the curriculum, breakfast and after-school clubs, school meals, tuck shops, vending, water provision, packed lunches, dining environment, alternative food supplies close to school etc.
- Starting Early is available on our web site at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ofsteadearly.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ofsteadearly.pdf) and has been disseminated to school Governors, head teachers, caterers, other Government Departments, and others with an interest in school nutrition.

## 8. DRINKS VENDING IN SCHOOLS

- The Agency commissioned the Health Education Trust to develop, pilot and evaluate economically viable healthier **drinks** vending in secondary schools. Testing of healthier drinks vending machines took place in 12 schools in 4 areas.

Report was published on the Agency's web site in April 2004 at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/vendingreport.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/vendingreport.pdf) Results indicate that healthier drinks vending in schools can be economically viable if managed properly. Guidelines for healthier drinks vending will be disseminated with support from the National Dairy Council. This project will also identify a model for rolling out the guidance into other schools and areas promoting a greater uptake of healthier drinks during the school day.

- This work will also feature in an article in MODUS – see above.

## **9. UK SCHOOL LUNCH BOX SURVEY**

- The Agency commissioned the Community Nutrition Group (British Dietetics Association) to undertake a survey in 2003 to collect information on the food and nutrient content of school lunch boxes in the UK. The outcome has been disseminated via media articles and the Agency website on [www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/lunchbox](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/lunchbox) The Agency has also made a month's worth of healthier lunch box suggestions available on the web site.
- The Agency has commissioned another survey in 2004 to collect information on the food and nutrient content of school lunch boxes across England. The findings will be disseminated via the Agency's website with advice for parents, carers and teachers, together with further lunchbox menu suggestions by September 2004.

## **10. SCHOOL MEALS RESEARCH PROJECT**

- The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Food Standards Agency have commissioned research to assess whether food provided at school lunches in secondary schools in England complies with statutory nutritional standards (introduced in April 2001) and associated guidance. The survey has also assessed the food consumed against the Caroline Walker Trust's nutritional guidelines for school meals (Caroline Walker Trust (1992) Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals. Report of an Expert Working Group. London: Caroline Walker Trust) and gathered information on the influences on food choice that can be modified by schools.
- The report of this work is available on the Agency's web site at [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/secondaryschoolmeals.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/secondaryschoolmeals.pdf)

## **11. School Governors Newsletter**

- An article of potential interest to school governors on SACN salt recommendations for children was published by DfES on the GovernorNet web site in 2003. It also appeared in abbreviated form in the governors' newsletter in September 2003. DfES has also publicised the core competencies consultation on the GovernorNet web site and in the newsletter.

## 12. National Governors Council (NGC)

- NGC have jointly with the Agency produced and disseminated a ‘consultation pack’. The pack contained information on salt targets for children and young people as well as the Agency’s lunchbox survey and lunchbox menu suggestions.
- A range of issues was identified to school governors as a checklist to stimulate discussion with Governing Bodies. NGC and the Agency have published the report on their web sites ([www.ngc.org.uk](http://www.ngc.org.uk) and [www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ngcreport.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/ngcreport.pdf) respectively) of the feedback from individual Governors through written questionnaires as well as through focus groups. This has enabled the Agency to gather important information about how school Governing Bodies are reacting to the work the Agency is undertaking and the practical impact of this in schools.
- Feedback showed that Governors are confused about their strategic role and the day to day management role of Heads. As a result the NGC have been commissioned to develop a Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies regarding food issues in schools. This will be published in autumn 2004.
- Further collaborations with NGC have been agreed in order to maintain the profile of food and nutrition in the maintenance of young people’s health with this important stakeholder group.

## 13. FSA Cooking Bus

- Agency is funding a bus, which converts into a kitchen that can be used to train teachers and pupils in cooking skills. The bus is touring the country visiting schools especially those in disadvantaged areas. In this way it is hoped that children will learn skills to feed themselves safely and healthily. Outside school term the bus will also visit a range of venues in areas of high deprivation raising awareness and skills among adults.

## ADVISORY/SUPPORT ROLES

### 14. Food in Schools initiative

- Led by DfES and DH and intended to bring various food-related school-based initiatives together in a whole day, whole school approach to nutrition. Nutrition Division is involved in the key stakeholder steering group, the management group, the web site group and with providing technical advice to this initiative. Areas covered are school dining areas, vending, lunch boxes, healthy tuckshops, water provision, cooking skills, breakfast clubs, growing clubs.

### 15. DFES Healthy Living Blueprint – FSA input (Refer to DH note for detail)

- Nutrition Division has made a significant input into drafting, providing advice on content and details of information, tools and resources, which can help schools adopt a whole school approach. These tools include among others the Dish it Up! CD-ROM, the healthier drinks vending report, the OFSTED/FSA report on best

practice, the school lunch box survey, the school meals research report, the Cook It project and *Getting to Grips with Grub* competencies.