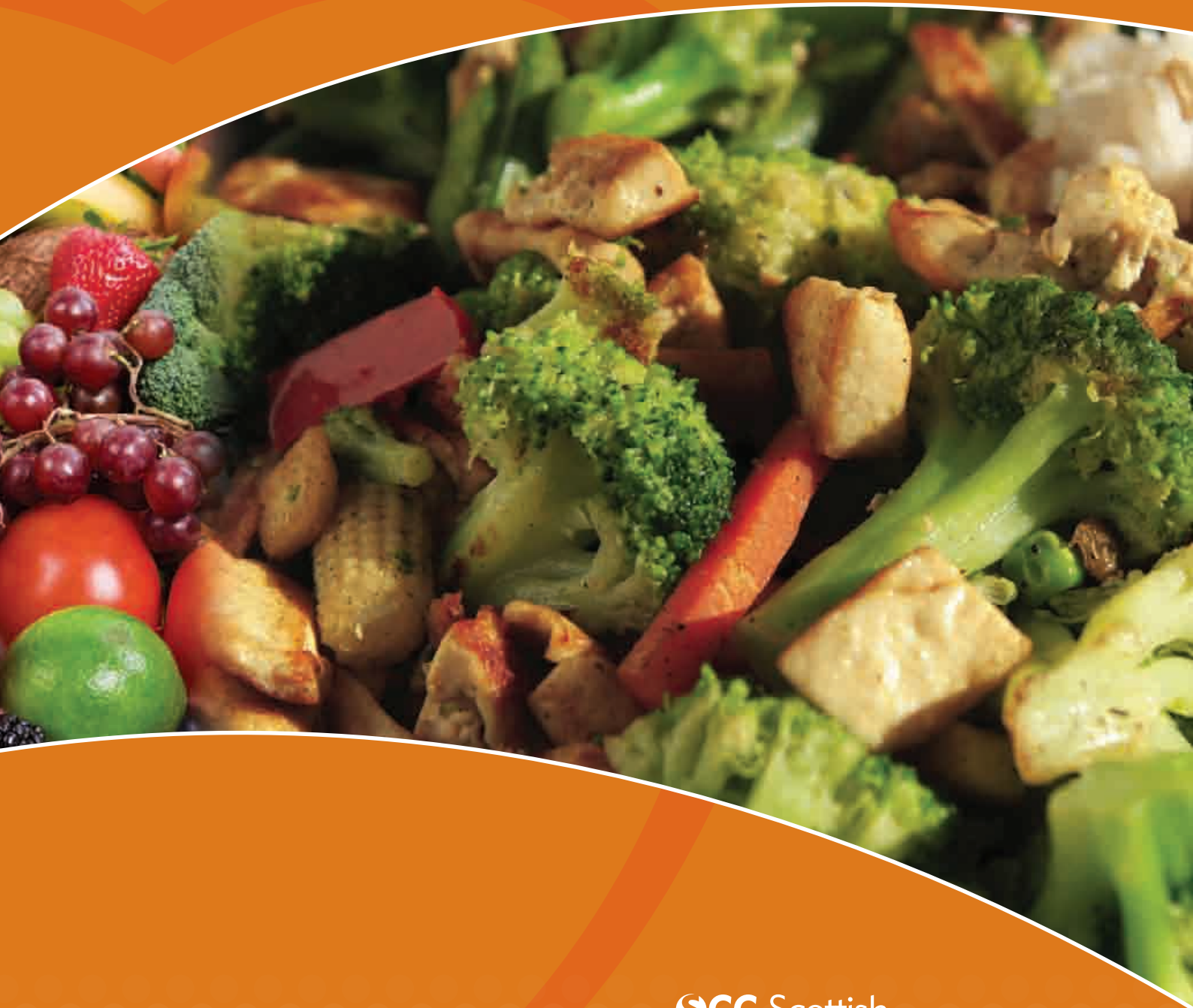


August 2008

# Out to Lunch?



## About the Scottish Consumer Council

The Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) was set up by government in 1975. Our purpose is to promote the interests of consumers in Scotland, with particular regard to those people who experience disadvantage in society. While producers of goods and services are usually well-organised and articulate when protecting their own interests, individual consumers very often are not. The people whose interests we represent are consumers of all kinds: they may be patients, tenants, parents, solicitors' clients, public transport users, or simply shoppers in a supermarket.

Consumers benefit from efficient and effective services in the public and private sectors. Service-providers benefit from discriminating consumers. A balanced partnership between the two is essential and the SCC seeks to develop this partnership by:

- carrying out research into consumer issues and concerns;
- informing key policy and decision-makers about consumer concerns and issues;
- influencing key policy and decision-making processes;
- informing and raising awareness among consumers.

The SCC is part of the National Consumer Council (NCC) and is sponsored by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. The SCC's Chairman and Council members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, in consultation with the First Minister. Martyn Evans, the SCC's Director, leads the staff team.

Please check our web site at [www.scotconsumer.org.uk](http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk) for news about our publications.

Scottish Consumer Council  
Royal Exchange House  
100 Queen Street  
Glasgow G1 3DN

Telephone 0141 226 5261  
Facsimile 0141 221 0731  
[www.scotconsumer.org.uk](http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk)

Published by  
The Scottish Consumer Council  
August 2008

Written by Mary Lawton,  
Food Policy Manager, and  
Irene Audain and Andrew  
Shoolbread of the Scottish  
Out of School Care Network

ISBN 978-0-9556496-6-0

The SCC assesses the consumer perspective in any situation by analysing the position of consumers against a set of consumer principles.

These are:

### ACCESS

Can consumers actually get the goods or services they need or want?

### CHOICE

Can consumers affect the way the goods and services are provided through their own choice?

### INFORMATION

Do consumers have the information they need, presented in the way they want, to make informed choices?

### REDRESS

If something goes wrong, can it be put right?

### SAFETY

Are standards as high as they can reasonably be?

### FAIRNESS

Are consumers subject to arbitrary discrimination for reasons unconnected with their characteristics as consumers?

### REPRESENTATION

If consumers cannot affect what is provided through their own choices, are there other effective means for their views to be represented?

**We can often make  
our publications available  
in braille or large print, on  
audio tape or computer  
disk. Please contact us  
for details.**

# Chairs Preface

The Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) has been active in schools, school food and the school meals service for many years, through both its policy work and development projects, and this report is a continuation of that work. In particular, the Scottish Healthy Choices Award, which operated under the auspices of the SCC, was at the forefront of improving school meal provision in Scotland. More recently, the SCC was on the Expert Panel which led to the ambitious Hungry for Success programme, which set nutrient targets and guidelines for school lunches. These had to be implemented in primary and special schools by December 2004 and in secondary schools by December 2006.

In 2007, 45% of secondary school pupils were found to be eating the new school meals; a very creditable figure given that time is needed for pupils and schools to adapt to the new menus. Improvements in the meal service continue, however, there will always be a percentage of secondary school pupils who will, if allowed, choose to purchase food out of school. This report focuses on what the motivators are for going out of school, where pupils go and what they buy.

The research commissioned by SCC, identified a combination of motivating factors (social, freedom, activity, environmental and food). It was noticeable that food was rarely of primary importance. Purchasing food out of school was seen as a positive experience by the pupils, who see themselves as young adults and wish to be treated as such.

These findings indicate that any changes to food in schools may not have a significant impact on uptake and that the pupils' choice to eat out should be seen as an opportunity not a threat. The challenges are for retailers to provide healthy, portable and tasty food options and for pupils to consider health and nutrition more when making food choices.

Some schools do not allow pupils out to purchase lunch, but SCC regard this as an individual choice on a school by school basis and only the schools can decide if this is desirable and practical. Even if pupils are kept in at lunchtime this does not influence their food choices on the way to and from school.

A strategy needs to be drawn up that is multifaceted in approach and recognizes the need for local solutions. It also needs to link in with other current initiatives such as the healthyliving award and the Neighbourhood shops project. Recommendations are given for elements of this strategy to Scottish and local Government. They include the need for local retailers to see the provision of healthy choices for pupils as an opportunity and the production of information for young people on how to make these choices.

**Douglas Sinclair**  
*Chair*

# Acknowledgements

The Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) would like to thank:

- Andrew Pulford (SCC researcher April 2001-2006), Maria McCann (Scottish Government), Dr Kathryn Backett-Milburn (University of Edinburgh) and Fiona Crawford (Glasgow Centre for Population Health) (GCPH) for assistance in preparation of this research;
- Pupils and staff of the three schools where the research was carried out
- Attendees at the Chairs Lunch to discuss the findings; Dr Anna Whyte (Food Standards Agency Scotland), David Cowan (Scottish Government), Dr Claire Brown (healthyliving award), Bill Gray (Community Food and Health Scotland), Jennifer Gallacher (Scottish Parent Councils Association), Fiona Crawford (GCPH), Angus Thomson (Fife Council) and Ashley Goodfellow (North Lanarkshire Council);
- Laura Nichol (HMIE) and Prof Gerard Hastings (University of Stirling) who could not attend the lunch but gave written comments;
- Jennifer Wallace SCC Policy Manager for assistance with the final report;
- Anne-Marie Sandison at SCC for publication and distribution of report;

The SCC's Food Committee oversaw the work for this report. The Members of the Committee were Liz Breckenridge (Chair), Heather Brash, Drew Ratter, Martyn Evans (ex-officio) and Douglas Sinclair (ex-officio)

# Contents

Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Background	6
3. Methodology	8
4. Detailed Findings	9
5. Summary and Conclusions	16
6. Discussion	17
7. Way Forward	20
Appendix 1 <i>Flyer</i>	22
Appendix 2 <i>Lunchtime Choices Interview Questions</i>	24
Appendix 3 <i>Written Student Questionnaire</i>	25

# Executive Summary

The increasing levels of childhood obesity are a serious public health concern in Scotland, and the school environment has been seen as an area where this rise could be addressed. In 2001 the Scottish Consumer Council recognised this and published research exploring the views of users of school meal services in Scotland, and hosted a Food in Schools Conference.

A key initiative of the then Scottish Executive has been 'Hungry for Success' launched in 2002 which set nutrient standards and guidelines for school lunches. This ambitious programme had implementation targets of December 2004 for primary and special schools and December 2006 for secondary schools. In 2007, 45% of secondary schoolchildren were found to be eating the new school meals and this uptake should be applauded. Improvements in the meal service continue and HMIE gives further recommendations in its 2008 report '*Further Food For Thought*'. It is understood that time is needed for pupils and schools to adapt to these new menus. However, there will always be a percentage of secondary pupils who will choose to purchase food out of school. This is the focus of this report.

The Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) commissioned research looking at the lunchtime choices of pupils, specifically S3 & S4, who regularly choose not to eat school lunches but instead prefer to purchase food outside school. The research was undertaken over a 12 month period from September 2006.

The aim of the research was to identify the motivating factors behind pupils leaving school to purchase their lunch elsewhere, as well as identifying where they go and what they choose to buy. Given the size of the samples this work should be regarded as indicative.

The following themes have been identified as being the main reasons for going out of school at lunchtime.

- **Social** – to be with friends;
- **Freedom/Independence** – to have a break from school and as young adults make their own choices of where and what to eat;
- **Activity** – to have exercise and to have something to do at lunchtime;
- **Environmental** – to get away from the general school environment and the overall experience of eating in the canteen; and
- **Food** – to buy perceived better quality/ value-for-money food or to purchase something that is not available in the canteen.

All students gave a combination of these factors for leaving school at lunchtime. For girls, social reasons were more prevalent and for boys it was reasons of freedom and activity. It was noticeable that food was rarely of primary importance. From a policy perspective, any changes in food in secondary schools may not have a significant impact on uptake as there will always be a number of students who opt to leave school at lunchtime.

Purchasing food out of school is seen by pupils as a positive experience. This choice to eat out should be seen by policy makers as an opportunity and not a threat.

## The challenges are for:

1. pupils to consider health and nutrition more when making food choices; and
2. retailers to provide healthy portable and tasty food options marketed at this group.

The way forward needs to be multifaceted and with local solutions.

The main recommendations to Scottish and Local Government can be summarised as follows:

### Education

Very specific information on buying a healthy lunch outside school should be produced by young people for young people. Pupils should be able to be guided by labelling and also recognise social marketing techniques. How these messages are communicated is critical if behaviour is to be changed.

Guidelines on the Curriculum for Excellence should link the development of responsible citizens with the need to develop critical awareness on food and health.

### Environment

The provision of healthy options for young people should be seen as an opportunity. Local retailers (including vans) should build on current good practice to provide healthy food 'on the go' that pupils want at competitive prices. This work should link in with the healthyliving award.

### School Meals

The school meals service should compete with the High Street and needs to be developed locally in consultation with pupils, via such bodies as the school councils. There should be radical thinking regarding the social experience.

These recommendations should form the basis of a strategy for improving teenagers' lunchtime choices and thus addressing obesity levels.

## 1. Introduction

The Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) was commissioned by the Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) to conduct research looking at the lunchtime choices of pupils, specifically S3 & S4, who regularly choose not to eat school lunches but instead prefer to purchase food outside school. The research was undertaken over a 12 month period from September 2006.

The aim of the research was to identify the motivating factors behind pupils leaving school to purchase their lunch elsewhere, as well as identifying where they go and what they choose to buy.

## 2. Background

Obesity, especially in children, is a serious public health concern in Scotland. Being overweight or obese during childhood is a health concern in itself, but can also lead to physical and mental health problems in later life, such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis, back pain, low self-esteem and depression.

Body mass index (BMI) is used to measure levels of obesity for these statistics. BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by their height in metres squared i.e. weight (kg)/height (m<sup>2</sup>).

Scottish National Health Service BMI Statistics for the school year 04/05 show that 31.3% of school pupils at S3 level (13-15 years old)<sup>1</sup> were overweight, obese or severely obese with 16.5% being considered obese or seriously obese. The prevalence of obesity since 2000 among S3 schoolchildren is shown in Figure 1 calculated using the 1990 UK reference standards.

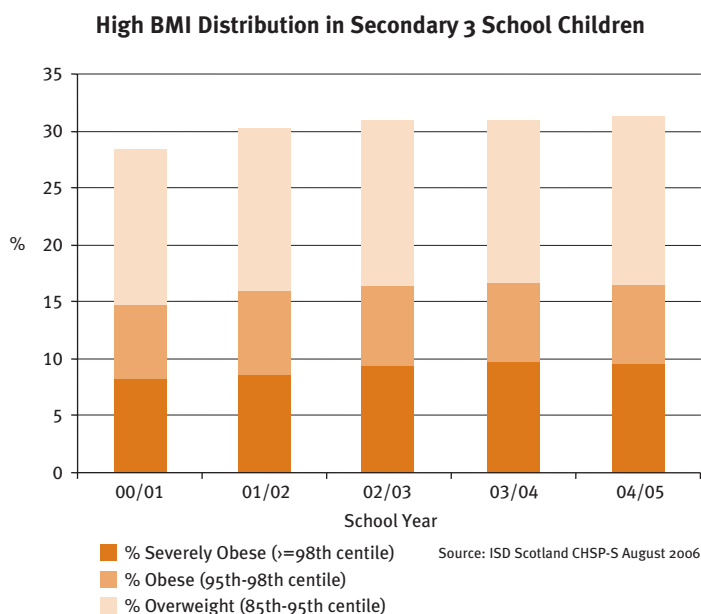


Figure 1 High BMI Distribution in Secondary 3 School Children.

<sup>1</sup> ISD Scotland (2006) Scottish Health Statistics  
<http://www.isdscotland.org>



Obesity is a complex population health issue with unhealthy diets and low levels of regular physical activity being contributing factors. The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2005 recognised the need to address this in an integrated way at strategic and operational level in its Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health<sup>2</sup>. One of the key strands highlighted was the school environment.

*‘School policies and programmes should support the adoption of healthy diets and physical activity. Schools influence the lives of children in all countries. They should protect their health by providing health information, improving health literacy, promoting healthy diets, physical activity and other healthy behaviours... Governments are encouraged to adopt policies that support healthy diets at school and limit the availability of products high in salt, sugar and fats.’*

The SCC had understood the need to act in this area through the work of its Scottish Healthy Choices Award and held a Food in Schools Conference in 2001<sup>3</sup>. The proceedings of this were published together with research on the school meals service in Scotland<sup>4</sup>.

In 2002 the Scottish Executive Report *Hungry for Success* set nutrient standards and guidelines for school lunches for pupils at primary and secondary level across Scotland. It recommended that these should be in place in all special schools and primary schools by December 2004 and all secondary schools by December 2006. The recommendation was also made that school meal facilities should not advertise nor promote food or drink with a high fat or high sugar content<sup>5</sup>.

While there is the Hungry for Success initiative for school meals, not all schoolchildren eat school lunches. Scottish statistics released during June 2007 indicate that the number of primary and secondary pupils eating school meals across Scotland has fallen since 2003 (Figure 2) with less than half of the children choosing to take school

meals.<sup>6</sup> These pupils will be eating at home, having packed lunches or buying their lunch locally.

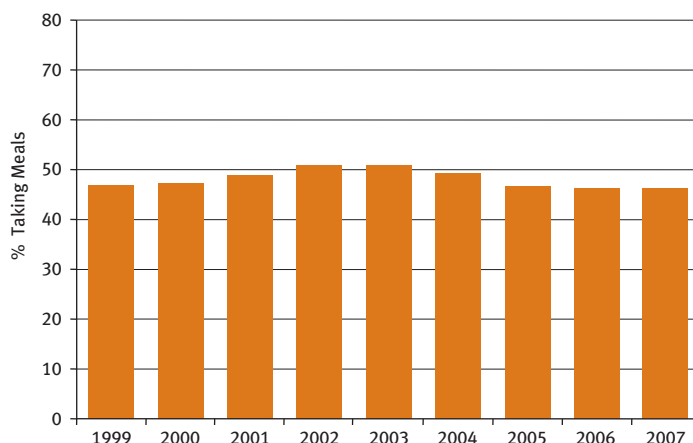


Figure 2 Percentage of secondary and primary pupils taking free or purchased school meals 1999-2007

The percentage taking meals in secondary schools has actually increased marginally since 2006 but this has been offset by decreases in primary (where Hungry for Success had an implementation target of December 2004) and special schools. In secondary schools, wide variation (both increases and decreases) in uptake has been seen at local authority level and with individual schools within local authorities, with the implementation of Hungry for Success been given as a reason in both cases.

In England, a recent OFSTED survey found that 19 schools out of a sample of 27 which introduced healthier menus found the take up of school lunches declining.<sup>7</sup> The report concluded that;

*‘The reasons for the decline were complex but included a lack of consultation with parents and pupils about the new arrangements for healthy school meals, poor marketing of new menus and a lack of choice in what was offered.’*

These findings are comparable with those of the SCC on factors that influenced the perceptions and take up of school meals;

*‘These related to issues of cost, choice and information, quality, the appearance and layout of the dining room, time constraints, age and access to alternatives’*

2 World Health Organization (2005) *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*

3 Scottish Consumer Council (2001) *Food in Schools Conference Report*

4 Scottish Consumer Council (2001) *School Meals Service in Scotland*

5 Scottish Executive (2002) *Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland*

6 Scottish Government (2007) *School meals in Scotland*

7 Ofsted (2007) *Food in Schools: Encouraging Healthier Eating*

The fact that 45% of secondary schoolchildren in 2007 were found to be eating the new Hungry for Success menus should be welcomed. It is understood that there is currently a transition for many schools to the healthier menus as secondary schools tended to make most of their changes in August 2006. Pupils need time to adjust to these new menus and schools are still working on the marketing of them. Improvements to the service are continuing and HMIE in their report ‘*Hungry for Success – Further Food for Thought*’ gives many suggestions.<sup>8</sup>

However, a large percentage of pupils have always chosen to not to eat school meals and will continue to do so. Many of these pupils purchase their lunch from local food outlets. In August 2005 the West of Scotland Food Liaison Group (covering 12 local authorities) surveyed food that pupils not taking school meals bought for lunch.<sup>9</sup> They found that, compared to Hungry for Success targets, 55% of the samples were above the recommended maximum fat content (34% more than double) and 85% were above the recommended maximum sodium level (50% more than double).

There has been relatively little research carried out with school pupils who do not eat school meals in relation to their eating habits and the decision-making processes behind their choices. The SCC building on its work in schools, commissioned research to find out

- what pupils eat when they buy their lunch out of school
- the frequency of eating out
- where they eat
- why they make the choices they do.

This report details the findings. Given the size of the samples this work cannot be regarded as representative but provides valuable qualitative data which could inform a wider survey.

### 3. Methodology

The research was carried out with three schools which were based in different local authorities: North Lanarkshire (new town), Stirling (large urban) and Highlands and Islands (rural).

The schools varied in size, as shown in the following table:

**Table 1: School Roll**

School	New town	Large urban	Rural
School Roll	1154	900	372
S3 Roll	246	180	72
S4 Roll	215	185	70

#### 3.1 Paired Interviews

A total of 27 S3/S4 pupils were interviewed: 10 girls and 17 boys. Of these 23 were S3 students and four were S4 students. Five paired interviews were planned for each school; however due to absences on the day of the interview only three paired interviews and one individual interview took place at the new town school.

The paired interviews were conducted by two researchers from the SOSCN. All participants were volunteers. Flyers (Appendix 1) asking for volunteers were distributed in the schools. Volunteers were required to sign a consent form stating that they understood the purpose and format of the interviews and were happy to take part. Volunteers’ parents were provided with similar information and an opt-out form should they not be happy for their child(ren) to participate. When more than five pairs expressed an interest in participating, a selection was made based upon interviewing as even a number of males and females, and S3 and S4 students, as possible.

Interviews lasted no longer than 40 minutes and each interview was based upon the same list of questions (Appendix 2). These interviews were carried out under the ethical framework of SOSCN, in particular following their principles on choice, clarity, confidentiality and courtesy<sup>10</sup>.

8 HMIE “Hungry for Success Further Food for Thought” January 2008

9 [www.inverclyde.gov.uk/NewsR.aspx?id=114](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/NewsR.aspx?id=114)

10 [www.soscn.org](http://www.soscn.org)

### 3.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires (Appendix 3) were distributed by the schools to S3 and S4 students, and again were completed on a voluntary basis. All schools were asked to distribute the questionnaires and information seeking interview volunteers, through form classes and students were asked to return completed questionnaires by a set date to form teachers. The rural school incorporated completion of the questionnaire into a classroom exercise and so the return on the questionnaires was extremely high. In total, 119 S3/S4 pupils completed written questionnaires in the three schools.

Table 2 is a breakdown of the numbers of participants per school, their school year group and gender.

**Table 2: Questionnaire responses**

	Location			Gender	
	Rural	Large urban	New town	Male	Female
S3	39	12	9	26	34
S4	40	18	1	31	28
Total	79	30	10	57	62

**Total 119**

### 3.3 Staff interviews

One school canteen supervisor in each of the schools was interviewed, as were one food retailer in the rural and one in the large urban location. These interviews were used as background information on the school environment.

## 4. Detailed Findings

### 4.1 Background Information on Schools

All three schools have been participating in Hungry for Success for between two and four years; the new town school has a bronze Health Promoting School status, and has been put forward for silver. The rural school has also received “Health Promoting School” status.

All three schools operate a card payment system for school dinners. These can be topped up by using machines provided. All food is prepared on-site in the canteens and a variety of hot main meals, hot and cold snacks, and salads is offered. All three canteens are set-up with different serving points for main meals, snacks and salad bar, with a queue for each.

Menus in both new town and large urban schools rotate on a four-week cycle and change completely every three months.

The rural school provides an optional lunch pre-ordering service; however uptake of this is low. (Orders must be placed and paid for prior to 8.55am each day yet many of the pupils travel by bus and arrive after this time.)

The research gathered background information on the food served in each of the three schools:

- New town: The following choices are provided on a daily basis: starter, main course, vegetarian option, snack, ‘potato of the day’, baked potato, vegetables, salad, sandwiches, sweets and home baking.
- Large urban: New Hungry for Success menus were recently adopted in this school. The menu operates on a four-weekly rota that changes three times a year. Pupils can access food at three different points: one which serves hot and main meals, another serves sandwiches and snacks and the third salads and cold snacks. Puddings are available, as are home baking and fruit. A vegetarian option is always available.

- Rural: Two main dishes are served daily such as curry, lasagne or steak pie and one vegetarian hot dish. There is also a (less healthy) option such as hot dog, pizza or burgers. Chips are only served once a week and never with cheese. Paninis are also available and there is a cold counter serving salads and wraps. The only pudding is fruit and there are no sweets or chocolates on sale.

#### 4.2 Pupils Going Outside for Lunch

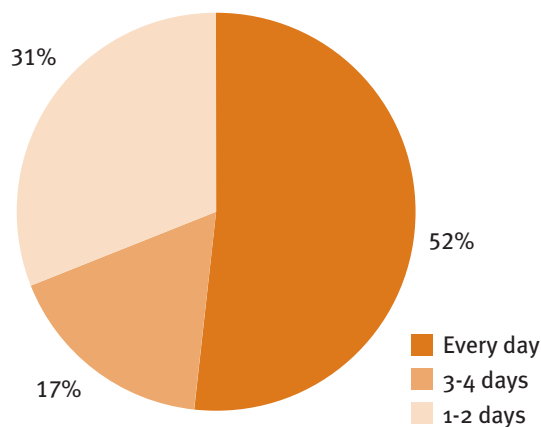
The pupils who indicated that they did go out for lunch were asked how often they did so each week. Out of the 96 pupils who responded:

- 50 went out every day (52%)
- 16 went out 3-4 days a week (17%)
- 30 went out 1-2 days a week (31%).

Of those students who opt to go out of school, the majority (52%) do so everyday.

**Figure 3**

How often do pupils go out for lunch each week?



Pupils indicated that if they do not go outside then it is for a practical reason such as sports practice, a club during lunch time or an early school finish which necessitates catching a bus.

The weather affects some students' decision on whether to go out or not - if it is raining then girls felt that they were less likely to go out than boys. School staff also commented on the increased number of students taking school dinners on wet days.

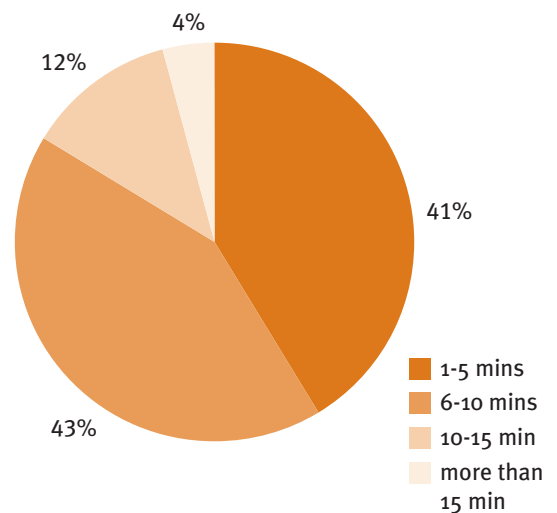
#### 4.3 Proximity and Speed of Food Outlets to Schools

Pupils who left school for lunch were asked how long it takes them to walk to purchase their lunch. Ninety-eight pupils responded to this question:

- 40 pupils reported walking for 1-5 minutes (41%);
- 42 pupils reported walking 6-10 minutes (43%);
- 12 pupils reported walking 10-15 minutes (12%);
- 4 pupils reported walking for more than 15 minutes (4%).

**Figure 4**

How long does it take pupils to walk to food outlets?



Two interviewees in the large urban school run to food outlets which would normally be a 20-minute walk away, and in the new town school two interviewees catch a bus into the town centre approximately two miles away.

School lunchtimes in the three schools vary in length between 45 and 55 minutes; pupils are therefore unable to spend much more than ten minutes reaching the food outlets without being late for afternoon classes.

Pupils who left school for lunch were also asked how long they have to queue to purchase food outside of school. Out of the 54 pupils that responded to this question:

- 50 pupils reported queuing for between 1-5 minutes;
- 4 pupils reported queuing for between 6-10 minutes.

#### 4.4 Availability of Food Outlets

Students in the rural school are able to choose from a variety of retail outlets: a café, two sandwich shops, three convenience/general stores, a chip shop and a sweet shop.

Students in the large urban school are able to choose from a large supermarket, a take-away/restaurant or convenience store (10-minute walk) or the town centre (10-minute run/20-minute walk) where there is a wide selection of supermarkets, cafes, fast food outlets, bakeries etc.

Students in the new town school are able to choose from two convenience stores or an ice-cream van (10-minute walk) or the town centre (10-15 minute bus ride) where there is a wide selection of supermarkets, cafes, fast food outlets, bakeries etc.

Students in all three schools reported that they tend to go to the same food outlets each day. Students in the rural school stated that they might go to several outlets to purchase different elements of their lunch, especially sweets and drinks, if they know where they can purchase them most cheaply.

In two areas the researchers were able to speak to the owners of food outlets. In the rural area, the local delicatessen and sandwich shop report that during term-time, school pupils provide the shop with its largest revenue. The shop lets the pupils pre-order lunches so they are almost guaranteed to get what they want.

In the large urban location, the researchers spoke to workers in a supermarket café. Prior to the school pupils arriving, portions of chips and hot rolls are prepared ready to be purchased. Tomato and cheese pizzas were also recently introduced at the café after the pupils were consulted about their preferences. The staff consults pupils on what they would like to eat and occasionally provide samples of new food for them to try but staff reported pupils treating new foods with suspicion. Although the café is extremely busy at lunchtime,

staff reported that the pupils were generally well behaved. The staff also commented on the positive aspect of pupils socialising with young people from other schools.

#### 4.5 Food Choices

The questionnaire asked pupils to report the foods that they purchased for lunch outside of school. Tables 3 and 4 show the most popular foods and drinks for each school.

**Table 3: Top 10 most popular foods**

	New town	Large urban	Rural
1.	Pizza	Chips**	Panini
2.	Crisps	Sandwiches	Filled rolls
3.	Chocolate	Pizzas	Chips**
4.	Sweets	Crisps	Sweets
5.	Pot noodle	Roll & Sausage	Sandwiches
6.	Gum	Chocolate bar	Crisps
7.	Sandwich	Panini	Sausage roll
8.	Panini	Baguettes	Doughnuts
9.	*	Curries	Chocolate
10.		Cakes	Pie/Fruit

\*Insufficient responses \*\*chips might well come on their own/with curry sauce/cheese or as a side order with a meal

**Table 4: Top 5 most popular drinks**

School	New town	Large urban	Rural
1.	Irn Bru	Coke (& diet)	Water
2.	Coke	Water	Coke
3.	Water	Irn Bru (& diet)	Lucozade
4.	Milk	5 Alive	Milk
5.	Fruit juice	Fruit juice	Irn Bru

In the new town school where choice was limited to two convenience stores and an ice cream van, most students who visited the convenience stores bought pizza regularly as the shops offered a meal deal of a pizza and a can for £1. Pot noodles were also available instead of pizza in the meal deal. All the students from the new town school who visited the convenience stores reported eating the same lunch on an almost daily basis.

The students in the large urban school tended to vary what they ate more on a daily basis - mostly eating only the same thing once or twice a week. Many of the popular food choice items are no longer available in their school's canteen. Hungry for Success menus had only recently been implemented in August 2006 and this school could be considered to be in transition. Boys reported preferring fizzy sugary drinks whereas girls preferred water (natural and flavoured) or fruit juice over fizzy drinks.

In the rural school, twice as many pupils reported purchasing paninis than filled rolls. In interviews, pupils from this school were asked why they did not buy the baguettes or paninis in school; the students responded that the canteen was expensive and the quality was poor. Curiously, paninis and baguettes are on average 50p more expensive outside school indicating that students are making decisions based upon perceived value for money or other factors.

#### 4.6 Eating Lunch

All students said that they eat lunch on the way back to school with their friends. Some students who meet friends from other schools will eat lunch together by or near the food outlets. One interviewee said it might be good to have an area where they could go together to eat which wasn't by the food outlets or in school.

#### 4.7 Money

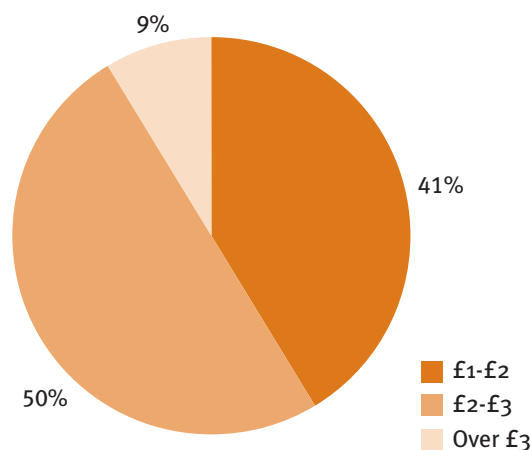
Pupils were asked how much money they had to spend on lunch each day. Of the 105 students who responded to this question:

- 43 pupils reported a budget of between £1-£2 (41%)
- 53 pupils reported a budget of between £2-£3 (50%)
- 9 pupils reported a budget of over £3 (9%).

No pupil reported having a budget of less than one pound a day on lunch. Most students receive money daily.

Figure 5

How much money do children have to spend daily?



During the interviews, none of the pupils reported not receiving enough money to buy what they wanted - most students felt that the amount they had was sufficient and also allowed them to save some money for a drink or snack after school, or to save it either for the next day, to 'go into town at the weekend' or to save up for an item, such as a guitar.

Students were more likely to purchase meal deals if they were short of money, and only tend to share food if a friend had little or no money.

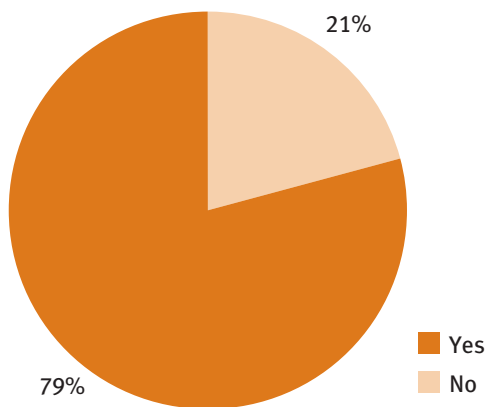
#### 4.8 Parental Attitudes

The questionnaire asked pupils whether or not their parents suggested what they should have for lunch. Of the 111 students who responded to this question:

- 21% (23 pupils) parents suggest what they should buy
- 79% (88 pupils) parents do not suggest what they should buy.

**Figure 6**

Do parents suggest what pupils buy?



Further comments on this issue were made in the interviews:

*'My parents say don't go to the chippy every day - try and have a variety.'*  
(Boy, S3, Rural)

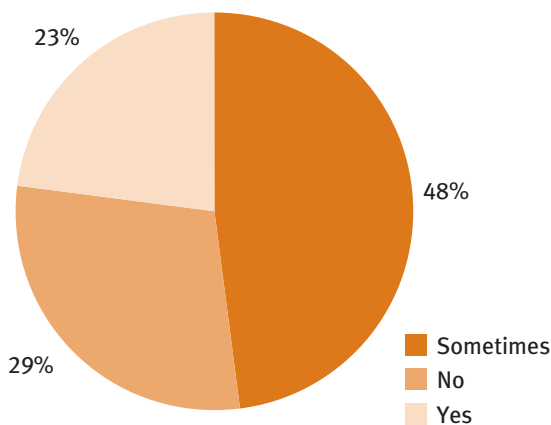
*'They suggest that I should buy more healthy food... but I never listen to them.'*  
(Girl, S3, Large urban)

The questionnaire also asked pupils if parents asked what they buy. Of the 110 respondents who answered the question

- 48% (53 pupils) said 'Sometimes'
- 29% (32 pupils) said 'No'
- 23% (25 pupils) said 'Yes'.

**Figure 7**

Do parents ask what pupils buy?



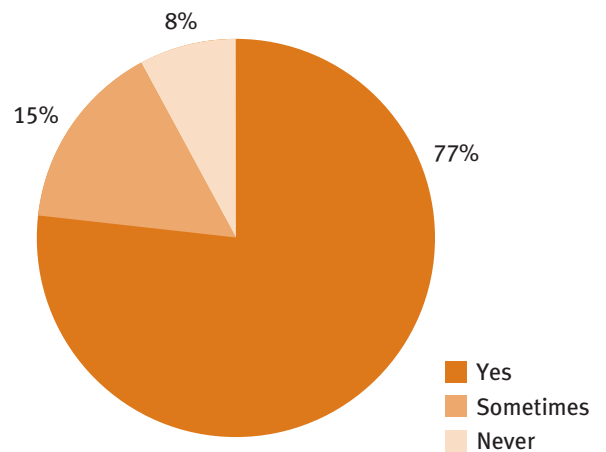
During the interviews, one pupil admitted that he must keep receipts to show his mum.

Nearly all students said that they would tell their parents honestly what they had eaten if their parents asked. Of the 110 respondents who answered this question

- 77% (85 pupils) do honestly tell their parents what they have for lunch
- 15% (16 pupils) sometimes do
- 8% (9 pupils) never do.

**Figure 8**

Do pupils honestly tell parents what they bought?



Those who answered 'Sometimes' or 'No' were asked an additional question of 'Why not?' Comments ranged from not wanting to tell them because it was unhealthy, too sugary, not substantial enough, or simply that they wouldn't like the choices made.

One pupil said that she would not tell her parents what she had eaten; she said:

*'I don't tell them because they want me to eat healthily. I don't mind eating healthily at home but I want to eat something different at lunch.'*  
(Girl, S3, Large urban)

#### 4.9 Why Do Students Go Out at Lunchtime?

A number of themes were identified across the three schools as being factors in choosing whether to go out or not. Motivations for eating out of school were explored in open questions during the survey and discussed in-depth during the paired interviews.

All those who took part viewed going out as being a positive experience. Students were actively choosing to go out and having to eat in the school canteen was seen to be the poor second option.

The reasons given for wanting to go out for lunch can be broken down into: social factors; independence; physical activity; environmental factors; and food.

#### 4.9.1 Social factors

Social opportunities were among the most important reasons for wanting to go out of school for students in all three schools. These social factors include:

- the opportunity to be with friends from school (all three schools); and
- the opportunity to meet other individuals not in school, such as friends (from other schools) or family.

During interviews the following comments were made:

*‘You can get together with friends from other classes.’*

(Girl, S3, Rural)

*‘You can see family uptown.’*

(Girl, S3, Rural)

Students in the new town and large urban school referred to the ability to meet with friends from another school at lunchtime. One student in the urban school said that she would like somewhere to go where the two schools could come together and they could eat lunch.

#### 4.9.2 Freedom/Independence

Although this was another main factor for many students, independence was mostly mentioned by boys during the interviews. Pupils from all three schools reported that they went out of school for lunch because:

- They want to have a break from school.
- As young adults, they are exercising their right of choosing where and what to eat.

- Outside school, pupils report being treated as young adults; for example’ food outlets will prepare food choices on request for pupils rather than them having to take what is available in schools.

During interviews the following comments were made:

*‘(I go out) to get a break from the place - I don’t want to be stuck in there all day.’*

(Boy, S4, Large urban)

*‘Freedom - you can do what you want.’*

(Boy, S4, Rural)

#### 4.9.3 Physical activity

Activity appeared to be the least popular of the main motivating factors; however it did play an important role for some students in all the schools. For example, pupils reported that going outside school for lunch gave them:

- something to do during lunchtime
- opportunity to take some exercise.

The opportunity to take exercise appeared to be of more importance to boys than girls.

During interviews the following comments were made:

*‘It takes up more time walking to the shop, being at the shop and then walking back – it takes up your lunch hour.’*

(Boy, S3, Large urban)

*‘I enjoy the exercise.’*

(Boy, S3, Rural)

*‘I like something to do. The school is not bad at laying on activities at lunchtime... [friend adds]...but most activities are music or sports clubs...it might be better if there were other clubs as well like IT or history.’*

(Girl, S3, Large urban)

*‘We need some activities at lunchtime.’*

(Girl, S3, Large urban)



#### 4.9.4 Environmental factors

While environmental factors may be of less importance than social ones, nearly every student mentioned the school dining experience in negative terms. Environmental reasons given for wanting to go outside of school for lunch included:

- wanting to be away from the school environment
- dislike of school canteen and the general experience of eating there.

The dislike of the school or canteen environment can be so strong that pupils will continue leaving the school for lunch even when the weather is poor.

The following specific points on the school environment were raised by students in all three schools:

- The school canteen is too small for the number of students using it.
- There are insufficient chairs, and even although there may be spare chairs they may be isolated and so students may not be able to sit with friends.
- The queues are too long.
- Due to the fact there is not enough space and there are long queues students feel pressured into hurrying their food.
- Eating in the school canteen is not a relaxing experience.

During interviews the following negative comments were made about the school dining experience:

*'The canteens are too busy - no one sits at tables, everyone pulls their chairs together.'*

(Girl, S3, New town)

*'You are not allowed to take food out of the canteen- it would be nice to have somewhere to sit outside. Also, they are always moaning at us to tidy up and they place bins at the end of the tables, it's not a very pleasant environment.'*

(Girl, S3, New town)

*'We need a pool table, the local college has a good canteen - it seems to be the same size as the school canteen but has more seats... its better.'*

(Boy, S3, New town)

#### 4.9.5 Food

Nearly all students mentioned food as a motivator for preferring to eat outside school. In the interviews this tended to come out a secondary factor whereas in the written questionnaires this appeared to have greater importance. Key factors relating to the food were:

- perception that food is of a better quality and value for money outside school;
- ability to buy food/snacks of choice outside school but not in school;
- dislike of school dinners.

In the large urban school, the students tended to be influenced by being able to buy food which is no longer available in the school.

During interviews the following comments were made:

*'There are weird mixes of rolls, for example: cheese and pineapple - there tends to be a lot of the weird mix and then only a few of the more normal kind.'*

(Girl, S3, Large urban)

*'(School meals are) rubbish. Staff are nice but the food is rubbish.'*

(Boy, S3, New town)

*'Could be better - baked potatoes are burnt, sandwiches are soggy and the paninis are expensive.'*

(Boy, S3, New town)

*'I think that school dinners were better before- there were more burgers.'*

(Boy, S3, Large urban)

*'There is less choice than before.'*

(Girl, S3, Large urban)

#### 4.9.6 Negative aspects about going out

Despite going out at lunchtime being preferred by most of the participating students, some negative aspects were highlighted:

*'I don't like it when it's raining.'*  
(Boy, S3, New town)

*'I don't like it when it's raining and the tunnel gets flooded.'*  
(Girl, S3, New town)

*'My hair's a pure mess when it rains.'*  
(Girl, S3, New town)

Two S3 boys from the new town school didn't like if they returned late to school as they are given a row. One S3 boy from the rural school didn't like being in a large group returning from the shops as people may have to walk on the road.

## 5. Summary and Conclusions

A total of 27 S3/S4 students from three schools across Scotland were interviewed about their food choices and reasons for buying lunch outside school. An additional 119 paper questionnaires, covering similar questions as in the interviews, were completed by S3/S4 students from the same three schools. The questionnaires were not analysed before the interviews were held.

A number of factors have been identified as coming into play when students decide to leave school to purchase lunch, and what then to buy:

- social factors – to be with friends;
- freedom/independence – freedom to choose where to go and to have a break from school;
- activity – to have exercise and to have something to do at lunchtime;
- environmental factors – to get away from the general school environment and the overall experience of eating in the canteen; and
- food – to buy perceived better quality/value-for-money food, dislike of school dinners or to purchase something that is not available in the canteen.

For nearly all students a mixture of some or all of the above factors played a role in deciding whether to eat outside school and subsequently where to go to purchase food. Some indicated the need to be with friends was of primary importance while for others wanting freedom or having something to do was the main reason. There were pupils motivated primarily by food but that was closely supported by being with friends, activity and having a break from school.

Those students motivated by factors other than food would probably not be interested in having school lunches even if there were changes to the menu or the environment.

The research suggests that those students purchasing food which is also available in food outlets outside school, may be more likely to have school lunches if the food quality, value for money and overall dining experience were to improve.

Most students who opt not to use the canteen do so every day, or nearly every day; they only use the canteen if driven by practical reasons such as attending a club, sports practice, an early finish to school, or bad weather.

Students tend to visit the same outlets on a daily basis but may also go to various outlets on the same lunch occasion in order to buy all that they want. Most of them visit outlets within 15 minutes walking distance and spend a maximum of £3. For the majority, their food choice is not dictated by parents.

Their food choice varied depending on what was available locally (for example meal deals), perceived value for money, and items that had been removed recently from school menus.

Despite complaining about the queues in the canteen students often have to queue in the food outlet of choice; however, this is not seen to be an issue because the students are with friends, the queues are shorter, and after waiting they are nearly always guaranteed their first choice of food.

## 6. Discussion

The research indicated that going out to buy lunch was viewed as a positive experience and it was an active choice. A number of common themes were found as the motivation for pupils to purchase lunch outside school. These factors can be categorised as ‘pull’ or ‘push’.



### PULL

- Personal liberty
- Social opportunities
- More likely to be treated as young adults
- More food choice, perceived better value
- Activity – exercise, something to do
- Food made if not available

### PUSH

- Cramped canteens
- Food-perception of limited choice
- Nothing left they like if at end of queue
- School dining experience

The pupils could be influenced by one or a combination of the above factors. These can be categorised as follows:

### 6.1 Food in Schools

Food served in schools is only one of many contributing factors and it would appear that some pupils will wish to eat outside school whatever the menus and dining facilities are like.

These findings compare with those of Wills et al<sup>11</sup> who, in interviews with young teenagers from disadvantaged backgrounds in Scotland, found that the organisational structures in schools at meal times had an impact on children leaving school to eat. Interviewees also reported that social opportunities were a higher priority at lunchtime than food and eating.

<sup>11</sup> Wills et al. (2004) *The influence of secondary school setting on the food practices of young teenagers from disadvantaged backgrounds in Scotland*. Health Education Research, 20(4)

## 6.2 Informed Choice

Suggestion has been made that pupils should be kept in at lunchtime and not allowed out to buy their own meals. However, it should be recognised that the pupils in this study (S3/4) see themselves as young adults and wish to be treated as such. They are at a transition stage in their lives. The Curriculum for Excellence for pupils aged 3-18 has four capacities for all young people to become.<sup>12</sup> Two of these are:

Responsible citizens

- make informed choices and decisions

Confident individuals

- pursue healthy and active lifestyle.

Young people need to learn how to make informed choices. Going out to buy food should not be seen as necessarily a bad option as after they leave school they will have to make choices, and this is a stage in the growing-up process. Evidence collected from interviewees in this research show that some are already making healthy choices. Equally, students not allowed out but who bring in a packed lunch are not always having healthy food.

Research carried out on young people aged 12-18 to seek their views on the Schools Nutrition and Health Promotion Bill found that choice was important to them.<sup>13</sup> For example 44% of respondents thought that all food and drink in schools should be healthy; 55% felt not all food should be healthy; and 27% commented on the theme that young people needed to have a choice.

When asked if school meals should be promoted to all pupils, 80% of respondents were in favour with 14% focusing on the need to give young people a choice of where/what to eat.

In work with parents of young disadvantaged children K. Backett-Milburn et al<sup>14</sup> found that food choice and eating practices of their young teenagers were increasingly viewed as the teenagers own responsibility. Many felt that what they ate at lunchtime could be balanced at home. It was noted that dietary concerns seemed to be of little importance to those parents compared with the risks they perceived as associated with drugs, smoking, alcohol and sex. The report concluded

*‘In many respects the challenge for public health may not be simply to engage with parents with the issue of addressing food choice but rather to acknowledge and work with the wider social, media and community influences on teenage behaviour.’*

## 6.3 Environment

Rather than ‘lock’ pupils in at lunchtime (which could raise capacity issues) it would be better to try and change the environment to make it easier for them to learn to make healthy choices. It is not sufficient just to expect them to make these decisions; the environment needs to be altered too.

This approach is essential as pupils are not just buying food at lunchtime. The School Food Trust has recently carried out research into parents’ attitudes to school food<sup>15</sup>. They found that just over half of respondents with at least one child attending state secondary school in 2005/2006 gave their children money to spend on snacks and drinks on their way to and from school. Just under a third gave them up to £5 a week and 21% gave them more than £5 per week. The most popular purchases with this money were soft drinks, crisps and chocolate.

The question of banning street trading near schools was raised during discussions on the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Bill<sup>16</sup>. Legislating to impose an outright ban was not included within the scope of the Bill. However, the Scottish Executive (now Government) Education

12 Curriculum for Excellence for Scotland  
[www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk](http://www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk)

13 Scottish Executive Education Department (2006) *Schools Health and Nutrition: Young People Consultation Feedback*

14 K. Backett-Milburn et al. (2006) *Making sense of eating, weight and risk in the early teenage years: views and concerns of parents in poorer socio-economic circumstances*. *Social Science and Medicine*, 63(3): 624-635

15 School Food Trust (2006) *Parents’ Attitudes to School Food*

16 <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/bills/68-SchoolsHN/index.htm>

department wrote to all Local Authorities giving case studies of two Local Authorities which have taken positive action in this area. These include:

- 500-metre exclusion zone around schools during term time between 12 noon and 2pm and 3pm to 5pm when street traders are not allowed to trade; and
- presumption against granting new street traders licenses for mobile food traders within 250 metres but only where businesses operate within school hours and are seen to be targeting pupils.

Another approach is to use the vans as an opportunity. For example Fife Council is one of a few councils that have introduced its own healthy options van (Body Fuel) for schools offering pupils an alternative.<sup>17</sup> This initiative could be extended to working with local retailers near the school.

In Edinburgh, a fast food van (Streetlife Fare) provides such items as vegetable pasta and homemade soups to workers and has achieved the healthyliving award. Vans providing this fare could be encouraged to visit schools.

Methods of food preparation should also be reviewed. In March 2008 a set of industry guidelines was launched in New Zealand aimed at helping chip shop operators make takeaway chips healthier<sup>18</sup>. The seven standards include such advice as banging the basket vigorously twice and hanging for at least 20 seconds to reduce fat content. The work has been based on a chip-shop competition and research has shown that consumers prefer the taste of the chips when cooked according to the standards but also that the fat content is reduced by up to 20%. A similar scheme could be investigated here.

WHO Europe in their paper The Challenge of Obesity<sup>19</sup> notes the importance of the environment;

*‘A strategy based on creating a supportive environment and then promoting healthy choices has the greatest potential for changing behaviour in a way that is sustainable.’*

A strategy fitting these criteria should be drawn up for outside the school gate as well as inside. We

understand that this is being considered by the Scottish Government (Health and Wellbeing) at the moment. These findings will inform this work. The strategy should also link up the healthyliving award scheme<sup>20</sup> which works with caterers to provide healthier choices and the Neighbourhood Shops project where retailers are encouraged to develop their fresh produce and healthier offerings.

## 6.4 Relevant Health Messages

The way healthy eating is presented to young adults also needs to be considered. A study by Safefood<sup>21</sup> looking at adolescents’ dietary beliefs and understandings found that they classified foods as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ rather than using the concept of balance. They found that they held the view that:

*‘The ideal state of affairs was to be able to eat as much ‘bad’ food as possible without gaining weight. In other words weight rather than health is the overwhelming motivating factor in food choice for some adolescents.... healthy eating was predominantly regarded as a quick-fix solution to the problem of obesity rather than a long-term health strategy.’*

It is important that messages on diet relate to them, their self-concept and the long-term implications of the decisions they make.

17 [www.foodinschools.org.uk](http://www.foodinschools.org.uk)

18 New Zealand Standards for Deep fried Chips in independent fast food Outlets

19 The Challenge of Obesity in the WHO European region 2005

20 [www.healthylivingaward.co.uk](http://www.healthylivingaward.co.uk)

21 Safefood –Young People and Food Adolescent’s Dietary Beliefs and Understandings date?

## 7. Way Forward

There is no simple solution to the question of lunchtime choice for young people. There is need to lessen the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors to the outside retailers. However, it is not possible for all schools to keep all their pupils in at lunchtime. Students themselves see going out to purchase food as being a positive experience and a percentage of them will always make this choice. This decision should be seen as an opportunity. The challenges are for pupils to consider health and nutrition more when making food choices and for retailers to provide tasty, healthy, portable food options for them. These options need to be marketed to teenagers.

The way forward needs to be multifaceted and with local solutions. Action is recommended to the Scottish and Local Government in the following areas;

### Education

There is a need to treat young people as individuals and young adults, learning to make informed choices. They have to become demanding consumers. Young people need to learn how to make choices and believe that healthy-eating messages are relevant to them.

### Recommendations

- Information on buying a healthy lunch outside school should be produced by young people for young people. This would be very specific information giving real guidance, rather than general food messages which may be ignored. This should cover what food options to look for and what to avoid or limit to once a week consumption.
  - Young people should learn cooking skills and gain food knowledge that will give them the confidence to be more demanding consumers.
  - Guidelines on the Curriculum for Excellence should link the development of responsible citizens with the need to develop critical awareness on food and health.
- Health messages directed at young people need to be relevant to them and emphasise the link between choices they make now and their long-term future;
  - Pupils should be involved, for example via school councils, in developing mechanisms to limit the pull of outside retailers.

### Environment

At present the market is not encouraging young people to make healthy choices. Scottish Government and Councils are able to impact on the function of the market in a number of ways. A strategy for outside the school gates is needed.

### Recommendations

- Change environment – work with local retailers (including vans) should build on current good practice to provide healthy food ‘on the go’ that pupils want at competitive prices.
- Local retailers should be encouraged to see the provision of healthy options for young people as an opportunity.
- The Food Standards Agency multiple traffic light labelling scheme should be extended to and adopted by all retailers and manufacturers to enable informed choices.
- Social marketing techniques (i.e. systematic application of marketing concepts and techniques to achieve specific behavioural goals relevant to a social good) should be used for healthy choices.
- Work should be linked with the healthy living award and the Neighbourhood Shops project.

## School Meals

Although this research indicates that school meal uptake is not directly related to the food offered in a predictable way, young people should be consulted widely as to what they perceive as negatives about the dining experience in their individual schools, for example via Nutrition Action Groups. The right of children and young people to have their voice heard is enshrined in Scottish law through the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000. The S3/4 respondents to this research have not been brought up with Hungry for Success. It remains to be seen whether pupils coming through will have different eating habits or will feel the 'pull' of outside retailers as they become young adults.

## Recommendations

- Pupils should be consulted and relevant school-specific solutions found to limit the 'push' factors, for example finding ways to ensure supply meets demand, especially for popular healthy choices. This could include pre-ordering, price structuring and the provision of portable healthy food.
- Improvements in the menus and environment of school dining halls should continue. There should be radical thinking in trying to make eating at school more of a social experience to encourage young people to stay in school. This could include the creation of more social areas and the provision of more lunchtime clubs.
- Longitudinal research on pupils should be carried out on those introduced to Hungry for Success at primary age.
- Food culture as a whole should be taken into consideration, including the social aspects and valuing food.

It is important that any initiatives taken should be monitored and evaluated.

These recommendations should form the basis of a strategy for improving teenagers' lunchtime choices and thus addressing obesity levels.



Healthy or unhealthy?



What's your favourite food?

Are you in S3?  
We need you!

# Lunchtime Choices Research



How much do you spend on lunch?



Where do you buy your lunch?



EAT ME!

No, EAT ME!!





# Appendix 2

## So what's it all about then?

Well, if you don't eat school dinners but leave school to buy your lunch, we hope you will be interested taking part in an exciting piece of national research.

The research is to find out what choices you are making: what food you like to eat. Where you buy it. Your reasons for going out of school at lunch time.

Do you like what is available in the shops or food places locally? How much do you spend? Where do you eat your bought lunch?

We want to know about **YOU** and the **CHOICES YOU MAKE** at lunchtime. **It's not a test!!**

## What will happen?

We are looking for 5 pairs of friends in S3 who do not eat school dinners but buy food outside to take part in an interview. The interview will last no longer than 40 minutes and will take place during school time. 2 researchers from the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) shall ask you various questions on the choices you make. All your answers will be confidential- what you say will appear in a research report but no-one will be able to tell that it was you who said it. Also, if you decide that you don't want to take part even after saying you will, you can drop out- it's not a problem. Sounds easy? It is.

## How to get involved

If you are interested in taking part in the research you must complete a consent form and then ask your parents' permission to take part. Once you have this, please return it to school. We shall attempt to involve all of you who want to take part, but if there are too many people wanting to be interviewed, we will have to choose people. Even if you don't want to take part in an interview, you can complete a paper questionnaire.

## So who are asking the questions?

We are, and we are Andrew Shoolbread and Irene Audain, researchers from the Scottish Out of School Care Network. We both have experience of doing this type of research and are looking forward to meeting you.

We were asked by the Scottish Consumer Council to do this work for them. For more information on us, go to our websites:

Scottish Out of School Care Network  
[www.soscn.org](http://www.soscn.org)

Scottish Consumer Council  
[www.scotconsumer.org.uk](http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk)

## Lunchtime Choices Interview Questions

### Where do you go, why & how often?

1. On average, how many times a week do you buy your lunch outside school?
2. Does the weather affect your decision to go outside? (What do you do if it is cold and wet?)
3. Where do you buy lunch?
4. Do you always go to the same place to buy your lunch?
5. Why do you buy your lunch from this/these place(s)?
6. How long does it take you to walk to the shop/food outlet?
7. Do you have to queue to buy your food?
8. How long do you have to wait in the shop/food outlet before being served?
9. How do staff treat you?
10. How do other customers treat you?

### What do you buy?

11. What's your favourite lunch?
12. Do you think it is healthy?
13. How often do you buy it?
14. What else might you buy?
15. What affects your choice of lunch? For example: cost, quantity, special offers, weather/temperature, location of food within the shop, friends, healthiness, packaging and advertising.

### Money and parental attitudes

16. How much money do you get for your lunch each day?
17. Are you given money each day or are you given it for the whole week?
18. How much money do you spend on lunch?
19. Do your parents suggest what you should buy for lunch? What?
20. Do they ask you what you buy?
21. Do you tell them honestly what you buy?
22. If you do not spend all the money you are given on lunch, what else do you buy?

### Eating lunch

23. Where do you eat your lunch?
24. Who do you eat your lunch with?
25. Do you share food with friends?

### General

26. Do you like going out of school to buy your lunch?
27. What are the best things about going out at lunchtime?
28. What are the worst things about going out at lunchtime?

### School dinners

29. Do you ever have school dinners or bring a packed lunch?
30. What do you think of school dinners?
31. What could improve lunchtime for you?

# Appendix 3 Written Student Questionnaire

S3/S4 Student Questionnaire			
Secondary School Name			
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/> (tick appropriate)	Year Group S _____
Going out			
<b>On average, how often do you buy your lunch outside school?</b>			
Every day <input type="checkbox"/> 3 / 4 days per week <input type="checkbox"/> 1 / 2 days per week <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Where do you buy lunch? (Please list all places, and indicate how often you might go there)</b>			
1. Shop/van/café etc name: _____			
<b>How often do you go?</b>			
Every day <input type="checkbox"/> 3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/> 1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Why do you choose to go here?</b> _____			
<b>How long does it take to walk there?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Do you have to queue?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If yes, how long do you wait?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			
2. Shop/van/café etc name: _____			
<b>How often do you go?</b>			
Every day <input type="checkbox"/> 3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/> 1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Why do you choose to go here?</b> _____			
<b>How long does it take to walk there?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Do you have to queue?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If yes, how long do you wait?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			
3. Shop/van/café etc name: _____			
<b>How often do you go?</b>			
Every day <input type="checkbox"/> 3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/> 1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Why do you choose to go here?</b> _____			
<b>How long does it take to walk there?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Do you have to queue?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If yes, how long do you wait?</b> 1 – 5 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/> 15+ <input type="checkbox"/>			

## Money & Parents' Attitudes

**How often are you given lunch money?**

Every day       3 / 4 days per week       1 / 2 days per week

**How much money are you given to buy lunch each day?**

Less than £1       Between £1 & £2       Between £2 & £3       £3+

**How much money do you actually spend on lunch?**

Less than £1       Between £1 & £2       Between £2 & £3       £3+

**Do your parents suggest what you should buy for lunch?** Yes       No

**If yes, what do they suggest?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do they ask you what you buy?** Yes       No       Sometimes

**Do you tell them honestly what you buy?** Yes       No       Sometimes

**If no, why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

**If you do not spend all the money you are given on lunch, what else do you buy?**

**What do you buy?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What's your favourite lunch?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you think this is healthy?** Yes       No       Maybe

**How often do you buy this?**

Every day       3 / 4 days per week       1 / 2 days per week       Once every 2 weeks       Once a month

**What are your other favourite food and drink items, and how often do you buy them?**

Top 5 food items	Number of times per week		
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
Top 5 drinks	Number of times per week		
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>
	Every day <input type="checkbox"/>	3 / 4 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>	1 / 2 days p w <input type="checkbox"/>

**Why do you go out at lunchtime to buy your lunch?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you buy lunch to share?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where do you eat your lunch?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Who do you eat your lunch with?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you think of school dinners?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you think of the school dinner facilities (dining hall, staff etc)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What could improve your lunchtime?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is there anything else about lunchtime that you would like to tell us about?**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your help is greatly appreciated; please hand in completed questionnaires to your registration/form teacher by XXX.**





[www.scotconsumer.org.uk](http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk)



**SCC** Scottish  
**Consumer Council**

Making all consumers matter

Royal Exchange House  
100 Queen Street  
Glasgow G1 3DN

Telephone 0141 226 5261  
Facsimile 0141 221 0731  
[www.scotconsumer.org.uk](http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk)