

## School Meals

### Definition

School meals are the meals provided by schools over the lunchtime period to children and young people in Bristol.



### Why is this important?

In recent years a range of standards have been phased in to improve the quality of all school food. In September 2006 the food-based standards were introduced and set minimum food and restrictions on less healthy food served at lunch-times. The food based standards for school lunches apply to all school lunch services including hot, cold and packed lunch services provided on a school day.

A further set of standards - the nutrient-based standards became law in September 2008 for primary schools and in September 2009 for secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units.

The nutrient-based standards for school lunches aim to make the food offered healthier by:

- Increasing the vitamin and mineral content
- Decreasing the fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt and content.

School meals have therefore significantly improved in terms of their nutritional quality.



### What is the picture in Bristol?

In Bristol the majority of school meals are cooked on site using fresh ingredients. A variety of work is underway to improve the suitability and quality of equipment used to produce school meals, thereby ensuring that staff are able to produce high quality meals. This is complimented by a programme of training for both catering staff and teaching staff to ensure that healthy eating messages are embedded throughout the school day.

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email: [health@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:health@bristol.gov.uk).

## What is our current performance in this area?

School meal uptake is recorded annually and a standardised method for recording uptake has been introduced to ensure easy comparison with other authorities. The uptake of school meals is a National Indicator (NI52). Data from the 2009 survey show an uptake of 40.9% in primary schools and 36% in secondary schools. This is the highest in the South West region and above the average for England (see table below).

Annual Uptake of School Meals 2009 <sup>1</sup>		
	Primary School Uptake	Secondary School Uptake
Bristol	40.9%	36%
South West Region	27.3%	26.9%
England	39.3%	35.1%

*Uptake varies between schools and we are working with those schools that have lower uptake.*

## References and Resources

<sup>1</sup> The School Food Trust was established by the Department for Education and Skills in September 2005. Its remit is to transform school food and food skills, promote the education and health of children and young people and improve the quality of food in schools.

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

For advice on kid sized meals, visit: [www.nhs.uk/change4life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life)

For healthy eating advice for your child, go to: [www.nhs.uk/choices](http://www.nhs.uk/choices)

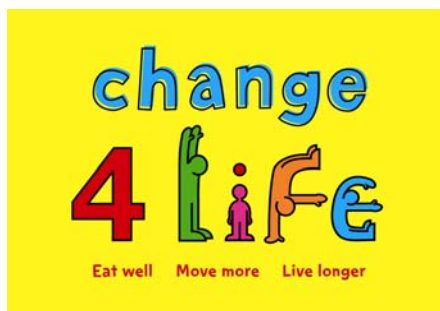
For information about children and young people's services for Bristol, visit: <http://www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/>

For food standards and nutritional guidelines, go to:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/>

and

<http://www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/eatwellplate/>



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