

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 23 MARCH 2004

THE IMPLEMENTATION of HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS : A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland

Report by Director of Educational & Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Scottish Executive Report, Hungry for Success.

2. BACKGROUND

The Education Committee at its meeting of 16 September required that a subsequent report should outline a Development Plan. This plan would address the implementation strategy for the 24 recommendations contained in the Hungry for Success Report, summarised below.

2.1 Introducing National Nutritional Standards

The establishment of Scottish Nutrient Standards for school lunches for primary and special schools by December 2004 and for secondary schools by December 2006. Monitoring the implementation of the Standards will be allocated principally to the HMIE inspection regime.

2.2 Eliminating Stigma

Primary schools should review their ticket allocation practices to ensure anonymity for free school meals. Secondary schools should adopt early introduction of a school meal application for multiple use cards (cashless meals).

2.3 Improving the Dining Room Environment

Improvements to dining rooms to enhance their atmosphere and ambience and encourage use as a social area should be considered a priority by Councils and taken into account in school estate planning. Other aspects of review by schools should include reconsidering seating and tabling, queuing arrangements, length of lunch break, supervision of meals, introducing pricing as an incentive to healthy food and issuing menus to parents.

2.4 Adopting a Whole School Approach to Health and Nutrition

Schools are required to review links between learning and teaching on healthy eating in the curriculum and food provision in the school. Education authorities should promote partnership approaches and schools should develop mechanisms to deliver partnership working. Senior management within schools should strongly support and endorse their school meal provision as part of the whole child approach.

3. PROGRESS

3.1 The Hungry for Success report seeks to be wide reaching in its approaches. It places a high priority on improving the school meals service and also the environment in which meals are provided. It encourages partnership approaches within the Council's community planning framework and identifies school meals as a key element in achieving Health Promoting Schools status, Community Health Strategy and tackling child poverty. Therefore in planning for the implementation of the recommendations of the Report, multi disciplinary working groups have been established which draw on the experience and views of representatives of Head Teachers, the Education Quality Improvement Team, Public Health professionals, Community Dieticians, Training, Caterers and Student Councils. The short term working groups are engaged to consider the following aspects:

- Hungry for Success Steering Group and Strategies
- The Dining Room Environment
- Menu Development and Nutrition
- Pupils and Parents.
- Effective links with Education and the curriculum

4. PROGRESS OUTCOMES

4.1 The Development Plan has been produced for approval and a copy has been placed in the Members Library.

4.2 The funding is available for 3 years to 2005/06 and the financial proposal is contained within the Development Plan. The budgetary framework and priorities will be adjusted as necessary in the light of experience and opportunity to build on those initiatives which prove to be most successful.

4.3 The East Ayrshire Development Plan is formulated with the intention that the 3 year funding must be used in ways that are appropriate in a distinctly East Ayrshire context to assist in achieving the National Priorities for Education 2 and 3; where priority 2 is concerned with Improving the School Environment and 3 that Every Pupil Benefits Equally from Education.

4.4 The core objectives of the report are to:

- improve the presentation of school meals, and to improve the uptake of free meals in particular
- establish the National Nutrient Standards for School Meals
- eliminate any stigma attached to free meals.

4.5 There are a variety of pilot schemes ongoing including; a new cycle of Menus which comply with the new National Nutritional standards, Breakfast Clubs, additional staffing to reduce queuing times, Free Fruit, Free Bread, Cashless Meals and a prototype for dining room refurbishment and discussions are ongoing in relation to the Dialogue Youth Scheme.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications are detailed in the implementation plan. The total funding for the financial year 2003/04 is £296,000, the financial year 2004/05 is £507,000 and financial year 2005/06 is £582,000.

5.2 The report recommends that its proposals are further supported by the Schools Estates Budget Plan and the Modernising Government Fund (eliminating stigma), as appropriate.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Recognition of the central role School Meals have in combating poor nutrition and helping improve lifestyle within schools and communities is a key attribute of the Council's Community Plan.

6.2 Consistent with the of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 and the ending of CCT legislation, Hungry for Success recommends that in any Best Value review the role of the school meal service, as part of the education and health strategies, should be taken into account. It should not be considered simply as a commercial trading activity.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal implications.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) adopt the 24 recommendations of the Scottish Executive Report 'Hungry for Success – A Whole School Approach to School meals in Scotland'
- (ii) approve that the Director of Educational and Social Services develops the school meals service as a Best Value Service not simply a commercial trading activity;
- (iii) approve the East Ayrshire Implementation Plan, a copy of which is available in the Members Library;

- (iv) approve the outline financial proposals relating to the plan which are in line with the funding made available by the Scottish Executive for 2003/04; 2004/05; and 2005/06 and that additional proposals should be developed for cashless meals within the Council's submissions to the Modernising Government Fund; and
- (v) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

15 March 2004
RG/MM

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scottish Executive Report Final Report of the Expert Panel on School Meals – Hungry for Success.

Members wishing further information should contact Robin Gourlay, Contracts Manager Tel: (01563 555710) or John Mulgrew, Director of Educational and Social Services Tel: (01563 576017)

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