



CHEFS IN SCHOOLS

2025/2026

**CHEFS IN
SCHOOLS!**

AGENDA

CHEFS IN SCHOOLS

- WHO WE ARE
- OUR PROGRAMMES

SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS

SCHOOL CHEF EDUCATOR PROGRAMME



**CHEFS IN
SCHOOLS!**



OUR AIM

We're on a mission to transform kids' health through food – plate by plate, class by class, school by school. We train school kitchen teams to make tasty, exciting and affordable meals that are packed with fresh, local produce.

Our proven and innovative models, of onsite or blended training, put food education at the heart of a school, laying the foundations of a life-long love of nourishing food.

We want generation-powering, mind opening food available in every school. Better is possible in school food. Kids are the future, let's feed them like it.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT



450 SCHOOL KITCHENS

Our programmes have supported over 480 school kitchens, transforming the food and putting food education at the centre of the school ethos.



**CHEFS IN
SCHOOLS!**

**HOW WE
FUEL THE FUTURE**



**CHEFS IN
SCHOOLS!**

**EVERY
SCHOOL
DAY**



SCHOOL CHEF TRAINING

Our short courses are packed with know-how, tips, and tricks, specifically designed for school kitchen teams, both in-house and outsourced.

Kitchen teams learn about school food standards, child nutrition, food waste, and much more.



**HOW WE
FUEL THE FUTURE**



**EVERY
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SCHOOL TRANSFORMATIONS

Our in-depth, bespoke training turns kitchen teams into food educators.

Packet mixes and ready meals are out, and school-made masterpieces are in!

From fish to focaccia and curries to chili, everything is made on site. We link schools with incredible suppliers and provide guidance on growing vegetables.

School food becomes an education in itself.



MEMBERSHIP

- **Recipe Library:** Access our nutritious and tasty dishes.
- **Online Resources:** Improve kitchen operations with training and education.
- **Onsite Chef Support:** Annual visits and regular check-ins.
- **Supplier Network:** Access trusted suppliers with quality, affordable produce.
- **Networking & Peer Support:** Connect with chefs via our forum.
- **Menu Support:** Get seasonal guidance, cost-saving tips, and compliance advice.
- **Professional Development:** Training events and ongoing staff development.
- **Kitchen Exchange Programme:** Visits to other school kitchens.
- **Annual Conference:** Exclusive access to our Chefs in Schools event.
- **Innovative Ideas:** Stay updated with industry trends and creative solutions.



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WHAT PEOPLE SAY



“My child is enjoying the new lunches. He’s tried everything (even lentils!) and has said how delicious everything is. I love knowing how adventurous he’s being at school, and that he’s also receiving such tasty, nutritious food.”

Parent at The Grove



RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

- School Food Toolkit
- Governor's Guide
- Breakfast Guide
- Reducing Food Waste Toolkit (coming soon!)



SCHOOL **FOOD** TOOLKIT



**A GAME-CHANGING GUIDE
TO HELP YOU FUEL
THE FUTURE**

CHEFS IN SCHOOLS!

SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS



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SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS

Introduced in 2014, The School Food Standards were designed to help children develop healthy eating habits, and ensure that they have the energy and nutrition they need to get the most from their whole school day.

They are broken down into Food Based Standards, which cover which foods are permitted and how often they’re served.

Certain foods, such as those high in Salt, Sugar, and Fat, are somewhat limited, whereas foods essential for growth and development are required daily.

The School Food Standards apply across the whole school day – including breakfast, snacks, lunchtime and afterschool meal provision



The School Food Standards

Eating in school should be a pleasurable experience: time spent sharing good food with peers and teachers.

These school food standards are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they get the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day. It is just as important to cook food that looks good and tastes delicious; to talk to children about what is on offer and recommend dishes; to reduce queuing; and to serve the food in a pleasant environment where they can eat with their friends.

As a general principle, it is important to provide a wide range of foods across the week. Variety is key – whether it is different fruits, vegetables, grains, pulses or types of meat and fish. Children love to hear the stories behind their food. Use fresh, sustainable and locally-sourced ingredients (best of all, from the school vegetable garden), and talk to them about what they are eating. Go to www.schoolfoodplan.com/secure to find examples of what other schools are doing to encourage children to eat well.

Remember to use Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services alongside these standards to help reduce salt, saturated fat and sugar in children's diets.

* This Standard applies across the whole school day, including breakfasts, morning breaks, tuck shops, and after school clubs



Fruit and vegetables

One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day

One or more portions of fruit every day

A dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times each week

At least three different fruits and three different vegetables each week



Milk and dairy

A portion of food from this group every day

Lower fat milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours



Starchy food

One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food each week

One or more portions of food from this group every day

Three or more different starchy foods each week

Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week*

Bread - with no added fat or oil - must be available every day



Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

A portion of food from this group every day

A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week

Only fish once or more every three weeks

For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein on three or more days each week

A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade, and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once each week in primary schools and twice each week in secondary schools*



Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

No more than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated, or breadcrumb-coated, each week*

No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week*

No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat*

Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch with fruit or vegetables or dairy food

No confectionery, chocolate or chocolate-coated products*

Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionery

Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked*

Any condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful*

Food provided outside lunch

- Fruit and/or vegetables available in all school food outlets
- No savoury crackers and breadsticks
- No cakes, biscuits, pastries or desserts (except yoghurt or fruit-based desserts containing at least 50% fruit)

Healthier drinks*

Free, fresh drinking water at all times

The only drinks permitted are:

- Plain water (still or carbonated)
- Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk
- Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150 ml)
- Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks
- Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey)
- Combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey
- Tea, coffee, hot chocolate

Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330ml. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls fruit or vegetable juice. Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice



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Unfortunately, the School Food Standards can be hard to interpret and implement by schools, caterers and kitchen staff. Here are our top tips for creating delicious and compliant menu options.

Keep it Colourful – Using a variety of fruits and vegetables will enhance not only the visual appeal of dishes, but their nutritional value. It is very easy to exceed the 3 varieties required weekly.

Consider the Whole Meal – Don't rely on the salad bar or bread to make up for a lack of nutrition elsewhere, pasta sauces, curries and other popular dishes must contain vegetables and sources of protein – especially for vegetarians

Confess on Confectionery – Avoid icing cakes, and adding unnecessary sugar to desserts. Sweets and chocolates are only for special occasions



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To raise the bar on food quality, **Senior Leadership** must strengthen oversight and ensure every menu, in-house or contracted, not only meets the standards on paper but on plates too, truly serving pupils' needs

Chefs in Schools are playing an active role in reshaping the future of the School Food Standards, with **suggested improvements** including:

- **Fruit and or yoghurt is the only dessert option 3 days a week, with cooked desserts (cake etc) limited to 2 days**
- **Pre-packaged junk food (often ultra-processed) should be removed entirely**
- **All bread and cakes should contain at least 25% wholegrain**
- **A variety of protein sources are required each week, with other sources such as fish, legumes and eggs included**
- **Ofsted, FSA and Governors to take responsibility in ensuring compliance**



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SCHOOL

CHEF EDUCATOR

PROGRAMME

FUNDED BY RIVERFORD

ORGANICS



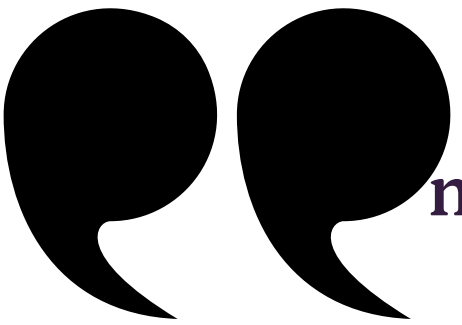
ENROLMENT NOW OPEN FOR JAN 2026 IN DEVON!



WHAT'S INVOLVED?

- **A 10-week hybrid training programme, which over 218 staff members have completed since 2023**
- **2 in-person training days at inspiring venues across the country or an inperson site visit from our chef trainers, connecting colleagues and like-minded chefs**
- **8 weekly webinars hosted by professional chef trainers, introducing a new topic each week**
- **Self-guided online learning using our bespoke and user-friendly website**
- **8 topics ranging from Reducing Food Waste to Basic Nutrition – suitable for in-house and catered schools**
- **Resources and 1:1 support throughout**

WHAT PEOPLE SAY



“ I have taken my time a lot more when serving, spending more time listening to the children, which means I am providing a better service to the children.”

“I’ve stopped peeling vegetables! Mixing mackerel in my tuna, using wholegrain rice and pasta, using fresh herbs and more spices, roasting squash and making batch sauces.”

“I try to be more consistent in encouraging the kids to eat a balanced meal. Displaying fruit & veg so that the children see what they are eating.”



2025 SCE Graduates



THANK YOU FOR

TAKING AN INTEREST IN THE

SCHOOL FOOD REVOLUTION.

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