

MAYOR OF LONDON

**Universal Free School Meals -
Good Practice Webinar
Borough Delivery and Procurement of
School Catering Services**

11 MAY 2023

AGENDA

UFSM Good Practice Webinar

Thursday 11 May April 2023, 14.00-15.00 via Teams

	Item	Timing
1	Welcome Rosalind Louth, Senior Manager Policy & Strategy, GLA	5 min
2	School Food Procurement in Southwark Gillian Boundy, Policy Officer for School Food, Southwark Council	15 min
4	UFSM for Primary School Pupils Jenny Pittam, Head of Contract Catering Services, Tower Hamlets	15 min
5	Questions	20 min
6	Close	5 min

SCHOOL FOOD PROCUREMENT IN SOUTHWARK

GLA UFSM GOOD PRACTICE WEBINAR

School Meals Transformation Programme

Southwark Public Health Division

May 2023

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Introduction to Southwark

OVERVIEW

Southwark is a densely populated and diverse inner London borough situated on the south bank of the River Thames, with Lambeth to the west and Lewisham to the east. The borough is made up of a patchwork of communities: from leafy Dulwich in the south, to bustling Peckham and Camberwell, and the rapidly changing Rotherhithe peninsula. Towards the north, Borough and Bankside are thriving with high levels of private investment and development. Yet there remain areas affected by high levels of deprivation, where health outcomes fall short of what any resident should expect.

Southwark is a large, ambitious and progressive council with a 'can do' attitude and enviable reputation. As a council, we are successful, passionate and forward-thinking.



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Improving children's nutrition through school food

UNIVERSAL PRIMARY SCHOOL MEALS

- Since 2013, through the council's £3m Free Healthy School Meals (FHSM) KS2 grant.
- School provides an ideal setting to encourage young people to eat well and learn to cook. This not only helps protect their health, but also sets the foundations for improved behaviour and success with their studies.
- Universal primary school lunch in Southwark supports residents in the following ways:
 - Contributes to family food security
 - Improves pupil's concentration and behaviour in class
 - Increases the amount of fruit and vegetables, and reduces the amount of sugar and salt, consumed by pupils at lunchtime
 - Encourages children to try new foods
 - Supports a healthy weight

An outstanding universal school food system can influence outcomes across strategic priorities

UNIVERSAL PRIMARY SCHOOL MEALS

Health and Wellbeing	Education	Food Insecurity	Local jobs, environment, and economy
High-quality food provision is essential to underpin and reinforce healthy behaviours .	Eating a nutritious school meal supports children's educational outcomes . The positive association between nutrition and cognitive function, behaviour and attainment is well documented	High-quality universal school food provision can contribute to mitigating impacts of household food insecurity and reducing health inequalities.	Universal school food provides local jobs for Southwark's economy .
A high-quality universal offer that is nutritious and culturally appropriate contributes to reducing inequalities through both nutrition and health promotion.	Universal high-quality provision can support positive cognitive and behavioural outcomes for disadvantaged children and thus contribute to narrowing the attainment gap .	Around 4 in 10 children living in poverty but who don't qualify for benefits related free school meals can now enjoy a free meal, saving families money and time .	Reduced food waste and higher welfare standards can help meet Southwark's Climate agenda.

ALL UNDERPINNED BY SOUTHWARK'S SOUTHWARK STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Southwark Stands Together - Southwark Plan - the Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Healthy Weight Strategy – Food Insecurity Action Plan – Education Strategy – Tackling the Climate Emergency Together

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School Food Procurement

THE SCHOOL FOOD MARKET IN SOUTHWARK

- The school meals market in Southwark is valued at around £8.3m (primary) and £5.3m (secondary) annually.
- Mix of outsourced and 'in house' provision.
- 60% of schools have a school lunch service contract with an external caterer; three of the largest school caterers (Chartwells, Harrisons and ISS) account for 75% of contracts. Most contracts are for a single school.
- In any year, there is significant retendering effort across Southwark schools.
- Commissioning school food is currently led by schools with council Education, Procurement, Legal and HR functional support on a by-request basis from maintained schools.
- We have excellent 'catering in-house' schools, offering meals which are nutritious and value for money. A few of these schools are part of a federation, which allows them access to pooled procurement arrangements, others pay catering consultants to access shared catalogues and support with food safety, environmental health and health and safety catering legislation compliance.

Advantages

THE SCHOOL FOOD MARKET IN SOUTHWARK

- Flexibility, school food can be adapted to schools characteristics, no need for shared specifications and menus
- Manage underperforming contracts, can compare providers
- School autonomy
- Works well with MAT models
- Less council resources required to run the school lunch service/ manage kitchen workforce/ no risk of schools 'opting out' of council led provision
- VCS/SME market access
- Less reputational risk?

Disadvantages and response

THE SCHOOL FOOD MARKET IN SOUTHWARK

- Fewer economies of scale
 - *encourage and facilitate grouped contracts

- Duplication of tendering activity
 - *service specification support
 - *bespoke school food management training
 - *share best practice through Flagship schools

- Less council oversight of quality and value for money
 - *introduce FHSM grant conditions inc. LLW
 - *in person inspections
 - *supported by EHI inspections
 - *meal take up KPIs
 - *Link take up to grant allocation
 - *annual compulsory survey
 - *Policy Officer for School Food/Commissioning Manager

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Ahead of September

TO DO LIST

- Contract baseline discovery – by compulsory questionnaire?
- Encourage MATS/schools to review contract T&Cs
 - Price, inc management fee
 - Meal volumes
 - Staffing
 - Negotiate
- What is current KS1 take up for each school, a guide for max take up?
- Capital investment?
- Introduce GLA grant conditions (+?)
- Encourage schools to introduce benefits related FSM application incentives
- How will grant be allocated to schools?

Southwark = Price per meal X 190 days X KS1 take up X 0.91 attendance factor
Paid in 2 instalments on 'separate income stream'

Find out more at
schoolfood@southwark.gov.uk

School Meals Transformation Programme

Southwark Public Health Division

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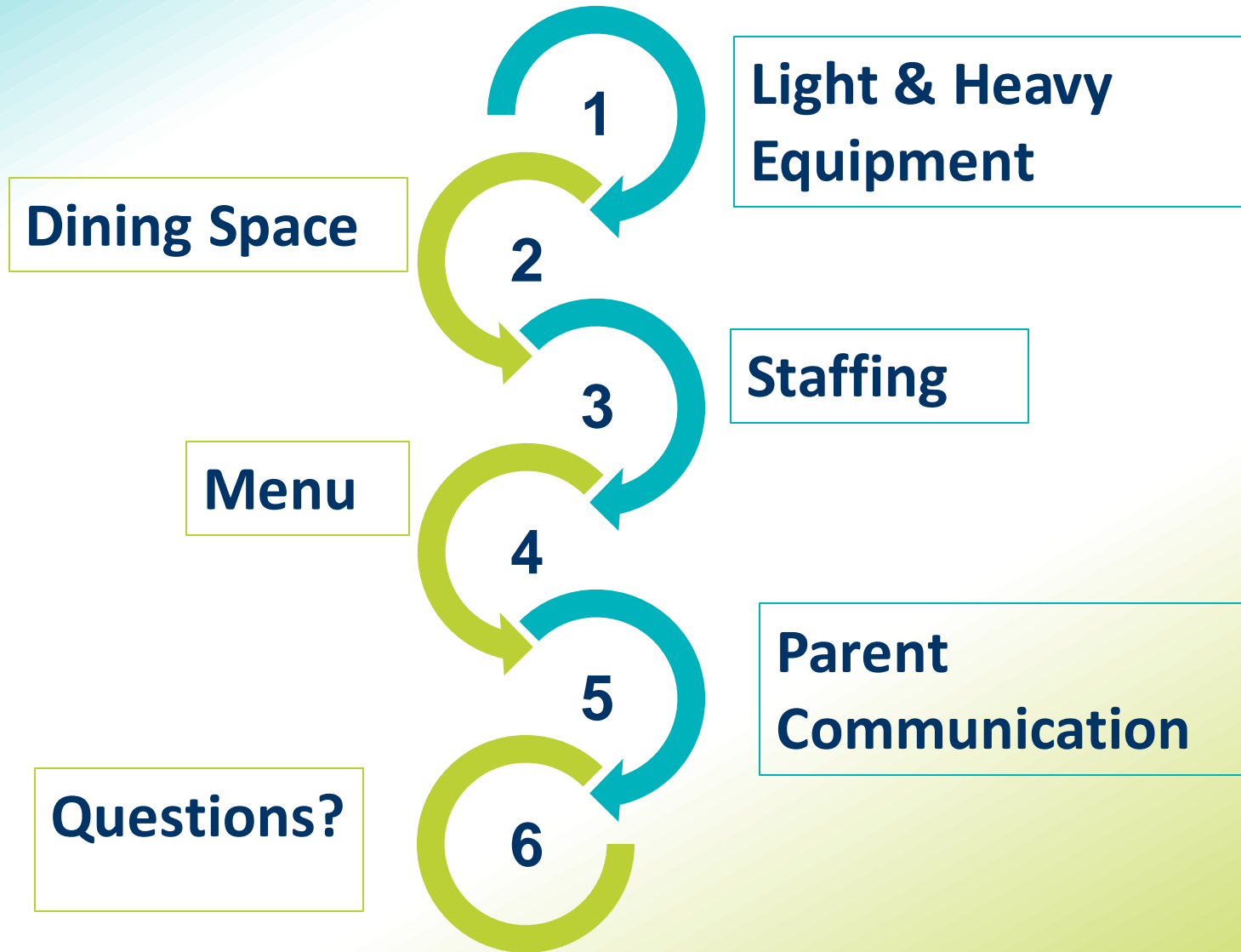
LONDON MAYORS UFSM FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Jenny Pittam

Head of Contract Catering Services



UFSM Planning



Light & Heavy Equipment



- **Recommendations**
- Survey the kitchen for cooking equipment and storage
- Replace old equipment or steamers with a 10 grid Combi oven
- Consider renting expensive equipment for 1 year (PKL)
- Reorganise kitchen to create more preparation space
- Convert office space into storage space
- Purchase additional light equipment
- Consider transporting hot food from larger schools to meet increased demand



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Dining Space

- **Recommendations**
- Review dining space, reorganise/clear to allow for more seating
- Start lunch service earlier for Reception pupils (11.45)
- Consider family service for the younger pupils
- Stagger the lunch service (rolling service)
- Have additional service points for salad/cold desserts away from the main counter (have older pupils to assist in service & helping to clear the dining room)
- Not everyone will take up the UFSM offer immediately – adapt/review the service to meet the level of demand



Staffing



- **Recommendations**
- Review staff levels based on plate rate per hour
- Recruit new staff on a 1 year fixed term contracts only
- Ask existing catering staff if they wish to temporarily extend their hours
- School to recruit additional lunchtime supervisor staff
- Review kitchen rotas for operational efficiency – more staff for servicetime
- Lunchtime supervisors to assist in serving pupils



Menu

- **Recommendations**
- Must be compliant the Government School Food Standards
- Consider reducing the menu to a 2 week menu cycle
- Keep it simple – have a third choice (jacket potato/filling option)
- Survey KS2 pupils to find out what would be their most popular choices
- Run taster sessions during the summer term targeted at KS2 pupils especially pupils who have packed lunches
- Run a UFSM trial day



Parent Communication



- **Recommendations**
- School to write to parents informing them of the UFSM offer & encouraging pupils to take it up (highlight the savings it represents)
- Encourage parents to continue to register for Eligible FSM
- Ask parents whether their children will take up the FSM to gauge potential numbers
- Schools could introduce a “No packed lunch policy”
- Aim to create a lunchtime culture where having a meal is the norm
- Invite parents in for a meal and publicise the menu
- Run workshops and taster sessions for fussy eaters



Key Benefits of the Mayors UFSM Project



1

Support pupils who live in poverty but do not qualify for the National FSM offer

2

Improve uptake of meals for eligible FSM pupils

3

A high-quality healthy and nutritious meal can help to reduce health inequalities and reinforce healthy behaviours

4

Support educational outcomes due to the positive associations between good nutrition, cognitive function, behaviour and attainment

5

Help to tackle poverty during the cost-of-living crisis



Questions

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