

A HEALTHIER PLACE:

**The impact of the
Food for Life programme.**



OUR VISION

Food for Life works to make Britain healthier through food. We want to make good food the easy choice for everyone, whoever and wherever they are.

Bad food is bad for Britain. A fifth of children joining primary school are now obese or overweight. Obesity and diabetes threaten to bankrupt the NHS. Half a million people in Britain are reliant on food aid. 25% of all UK farmers live in poverty. Food and farming is responsible for one fifth of UK climate impact.

Good food holds the key to healthier people, a healthier economy and a healthier environment.

WHAT DOES 'GOOD FOOD' MEAN?

- ✓ **A healthy and sustainable diet:** LESS high fat/salt/sugar processed food and less but better quality meat. MORE fruit and vegetables, whole grains and sustainable fish.
- ✓ **Quality food you can trust:** more fresh, local, seasonal, sustainable food, with low climate impact and high welfare standards.
- ✓ **Eating together:** more opportunities for social contact through food, building families and communities and tackling loneliness.

Our commitment to building evidence

Extensive independent evaluation informs our programme development as well as providing evidence of the impact of the Food for Life approach. It also enables us to support and influence national strategic drivers.

The University of the West of England has supported Food for Life to develop a flexible evaluation framework which is informed by good research practice and evidence of what works.

Our latest phase of independent evaluation 2013-2015 included impact evaluation within our schools programmes and key stakeholder qualitative research within our developing areas of work in early years, care settings, hospitals and universities.



Foreword - Gabriel Scally



Food for Life multi-setting programmes demonstrate a **SOCIAL RETURN OF £4.41** for every £1 invested.²


In my long career in public health I can honestly say that one of the most valuable things I have ever done was to support the development of the Food for Life programme. There are few public health interventions that have the potential to make such a powerful contribution to improving the health of the whole population. Given the fact that by the time children get to primary school one in five of them is overweight or obese, and that the proportion increases steadily during their time at primary school, it is entirely appropriate the Food for Life programme has had a particular focus on children.

Having visited many Food for Life schools over the years I have always been impressed by how Heads and teaching staff have used the programme as an opportunity to take a whole school approach to food. Everyone is involved and everyone benefits. The views of pupils, staff and parents should have been enough to convince me, but I like to see independent evidence. I was therefore delighted to see the results of the evaluation that feature in this very useful report.


With increased pressure on resources, local authorities are being pressed to improve local health outcomes in new ways. Taking advantage of partnerships is a key mechanism for increasing impact on health in a cost-effective way. Food for Life can help to deliver these co-benefits; joining up health, education, food and the community in a whole system approach.

I am delighted to endorse this Impact Report. I am convinced it will provide policy makers, councillors and public health teams with valuable insights into the pivotal role that school food can play in nurturing healthier people, a healthier economy, and a healthier environment.

Gabriel Scally
Visiting Professor of Public Health
University of Bristol and University of the West of England

Pupils in Food for Life schools 
ARE TWICE
as likely to eat **FIVE A DAY** and a third less likely to eat no fruit or vegetables than pupils in comparison schools.¹

“Evidence points towards the [Food for Life programme’s] potential to contribute to... helping ‘CLOSE THE GAP’ for disadvantaged children in terms of their health and academic attainment.”³

Pupils in Food for Life schools eat around **A THIRD MORE** 
fruit and vegetables than pupils in comparison schools, and significantly more fruit and vegetables at home.¹

Creating healthy places - how we work

The Food for Life approach works at a population-level with settings and communities, taking a whole system approach to make it easy, normal and enjoyable to eat well.

"Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love."



The Ottawa Charter (1986)



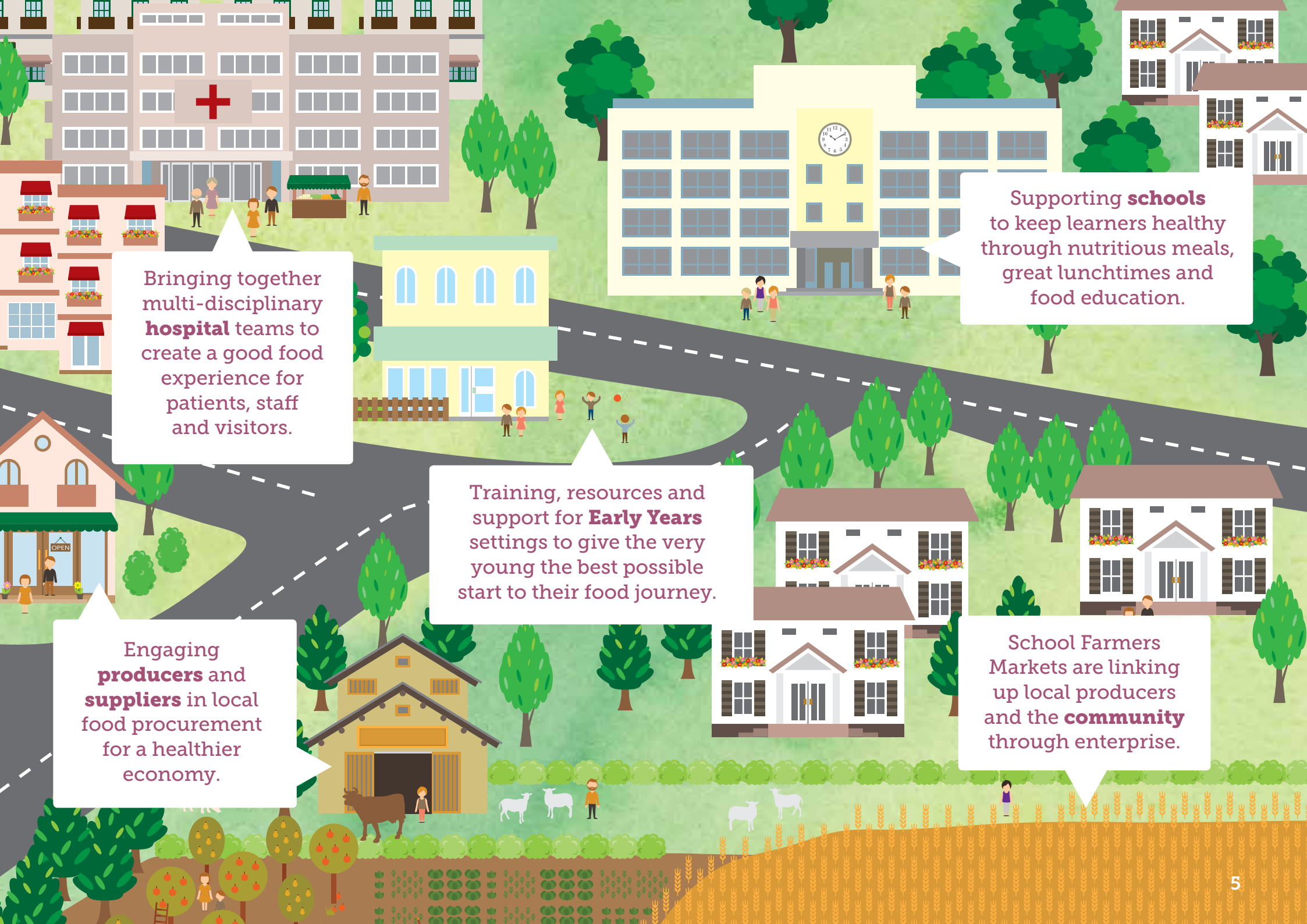
"A systemic, sustained portfolio of initiatives, delivered at scale, is needed to address the health burden. Education and personal responsibility are critical elements of any program to reduce obesity, but not sufficient on their own. Additional interventions are needed that rely less on conscious choices by individuals and more on changes to the environment and societal norms. Such interventions "reset the defaults" to make healthy behaviours easier."

McKinsey Global Institute, Overcoming obesity: An initial economic analysis, Nov 2014



Bringing together sustainable local 'good food' partnerships and networks.

Working with care settings and community teams to ensure food supports older people's wellbeing.



Bringing together multi-disciplinary **hospital** teams to create a good food experience for patients, staff and visitors.

Supporting **schools** to keep learners healthy through nutritious meals, great lunchtimes and food education.

Training, resources and support for **Early Years** settings to give the very young the best possible start to their food journey.

Engaging **producers** and **suppliers** in local food procurement for a healthier economy.

School Farmers Markets are linking up local producers and the **community** through enterprise.

Healthier People

The challenge:

- Poor diet is now the largest contributor to disease burden in England (from diabetes to cancer and heart disease), closely followed by tobacco.⁴ Scientists estimate that about a third of the 13 most common cancers in the UK could be prevented through improved diet, physical activity and body weight.⁵
- More than one in five children are overweight or obese when they start primary school, and this rises to one in three children by the time they leave. Obesity prevalence in children in the most deprived areas of the country is around twice that of children in the least deprived areas, a gap which appears to be widening.⁶

*Evidence of Food for Life (FFL) impact on pupil dietary behaviour.

The research design was a cross-sectional case-controlled study with engaged FFL schools and comparison schools which were matched in the same local authority area by Free School Meal eligibility quintile and size. Fruit and vegetable consumption were measured using the Day in the Life Questionnaire. The survey was completed at a total of 47 schools (FFL schools=24; Comparison schools =23) and 2,411 pupils (total FFL pupils =1,265; total Comparison pupils=1,146).

Our impact:

Changing diets when it matters most:

A cross sectional case-controlled study* has found that "Progression to a bronze and silver award is linked with higher fruit and vegetable consumption. The Food for Life School Award framework could be used as an indicator for key food related outcomes and can provide a proxy for positive dietary behaviour." (Jones et al, 2015)¹

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more fruit and vegetables
at home. (Jones et al, 2015)¹

This means that if ALL primary schools in England were Food for Life schools:

1 million 
more children would
eat five or more portions
of fruit and vegetables
per day⁷


100,000
more children would
be eating at least some
fruit and vegetables⁸

“ When I joined the school, there was a need to focus the whole school community on raising the awareness of healthy eating choices. The Food for Life approach provided a vision for this food experience.

The changes we've made to our food and lunch times have resulted in children being much more focused and ready to learn, which has in turn supported a rising trend in attainment levels.

We also celebrate how eloquent children are in explaining what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how they learn this at school and continue it at home. ”

Rowena Herbert
Head Teacher, Bolsover Junior School



Improving school meal quality

- Pupils in Food for Life schools are 40% more likely to report that they 'like' or 'really like' school meals. (Jones et al, 2015)¹
- More than 50% of primary schools in England are serving menus certified by the Food for Life Catering Mark. This means they comply with the school food standards and are serving food that is at least 75% freshly prepared, seasonal and only include free range eggs and meat that meets UK welfare standards.

Tackling health inequalities:

- Free school meal take up increased by an average of 13 percentage points over two years in Food for Life schools. (Orme et al, 2011)⁹ Universal infant free school meals has improved access to healthy lunches among pupils aged 5-7.
- Evidence points towards Food for Life's potential to contribute to helping 'close the gap' for disadvantaged children in terms of their health and academic attainment. (Teeman et al, 2011)³

Food for Life programmes across the life-course

Between 2013-2015 the University of the West of England undertook key stakeholder case study research of the developing Food for Life approaches in early years, hospitals, care settings and universities.

Early years: 'Staff appreciated achieving a [Food for Life Early Years] award, and believed it would be beneficial to promote this to parents and organisations such as Ofsted.'¹⁰

Care settings: 'Staff felt that changes made to resident meals are making a difference to their satisfaction, with signs that they are also eating more and enjoying meals. At one site staff suggested this had resulted in them no longer needing to provide supplements to treat constipation.'¹⁰

Hospitals: Food for Life 'stimulated the establishment of high-level multidisciplinary steering groups, and signposted aspects of food in hospitals that might not have been otherwise considered...'¹⁰

Universities: Food for Life 'has provided a useful framework which helped structure activity, identify gaps and provided a model for an integrated approach to healthy and sustainable food...'¹⁰

See Food for Life Summary and Synthesis report for more information www.foodforlife.org.uk/impact

Healthier Economy

The challenge:

- The public sector in England spends £1.2bn every year on food and drink and up to £600m of this is on imported produce, £400m of which could be sourced from within the UK.¹¹
- Creating a strong local social and economic return on investment is a top priority for local authorities whose budgets have been cut by £18bn in real terms between 2010-2015¹² and will be increasingly reliant on business rate retention.

Our impact:

Research by the New Economics Foundation demonstrated

£3 IN SOCIAL RETURN FOR EVERY £1 INVESTED

in Food for Life Catering Mark menus, with most of the benefit experienced by local businesses and local employees. (Kersley et al, 2011)¹³



New research focusing on Food for Life multi-setting programmes and considering value created for health, education and environment in addition to economy demonstrates a social return of

£4.41 FOR EVERY £1.

(Jones et al, 2015)²

Social return on investment in multi-setting programmes - share of value by stakeholders and interest sectors.

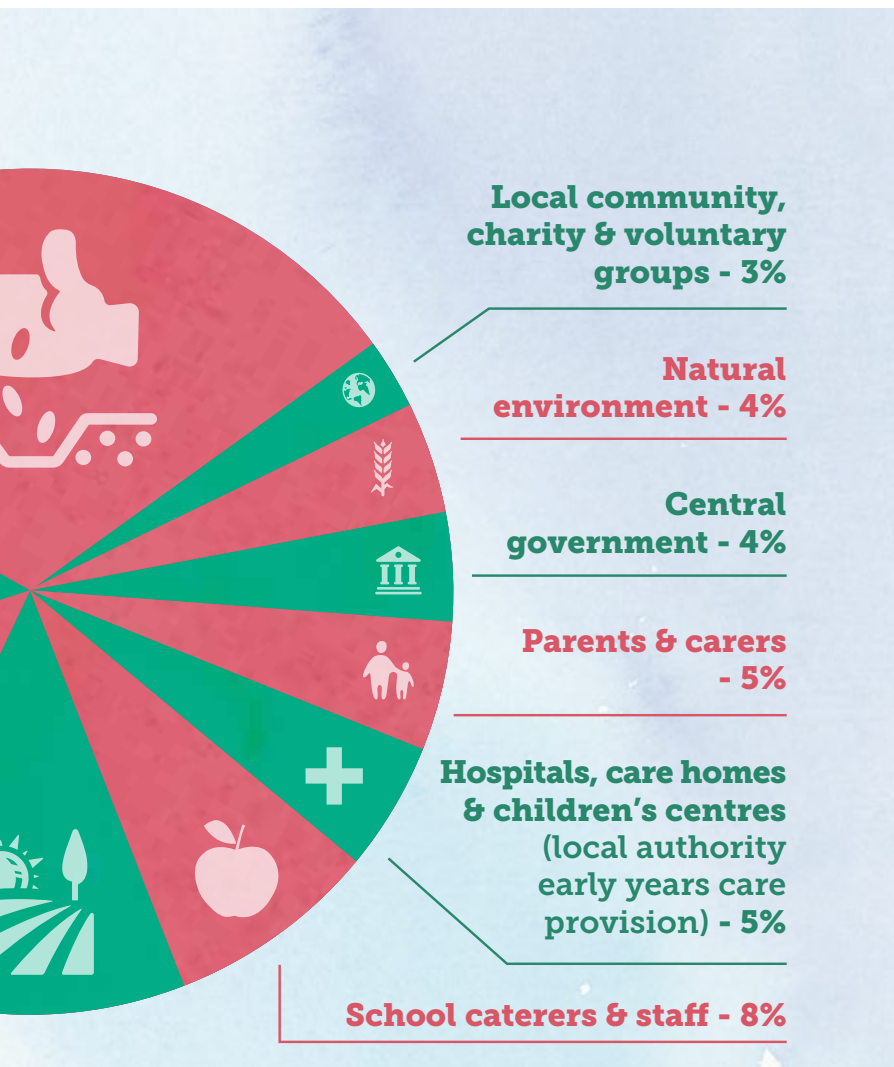
Local food businesses – including creation of local employment (farmer, butcher, wholesalers) - 31%

Schools & staff - 13%

Local authority & NHS - 13%

Employees of food businesses - 13%



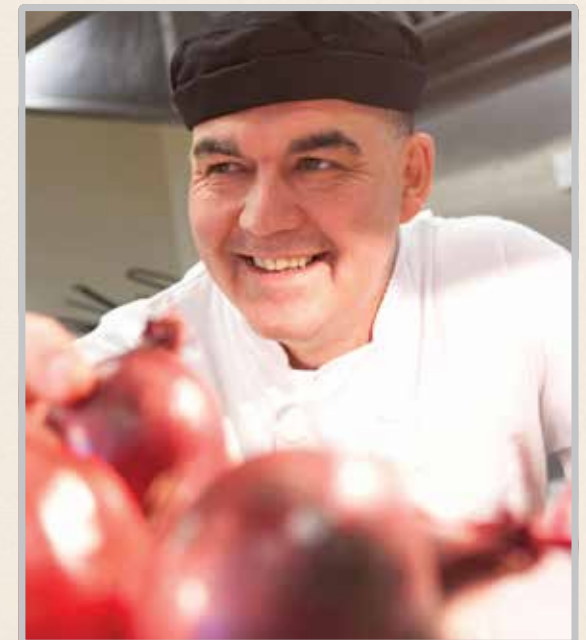


“ We're able to sell our mince beef to local schools at a price that can compete with the other big suppliers [in West Yorkshire] - whose mince might come from anywhere.² ”

“ We're starting to go from being 'price takers' to a 'price makers' model for retail businesses. But it's also not just about making money - it's about making healthy food and seeing the bigger picture. So we supply free milk to breakfast clubs. We've hosted 250 free school trips [for children] to see a real farm in operation. I'm interested in the links that Food for Life have to offer my farm.² ”

A joined up approach in Kirklees

In Kirklees, Food for Life provides a programme of training opportunities for school staff in cooking, growing food, food leadership and farm links. There is also a strong focus on training for school cooks. This includes teaching cooking skills for children, understanding the importance of food quality and good sourcing practices as well as composting at school. In 2014 Kirklees Council extended the commission to include development work in care settings and early years settings. Social Return on Investment research has demonstrated a return of **£5.12 for every £1 invested** in the Kirklees Food for Life programme with most of the value within local food businesses, employees of food businesses, schools and school staff, and local authority (Public Health) and NHS.²



Healthier Environment

The Challenge:

- Food and farming is responsible for one fifth of the UK's climate impact. Most impacts occur at the agricultural stage and the livestock sector is responsible for 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁴
- A growing body of interdisciplinary evidence suggests that there are strong synergies between the priorities for a healthier and more sustainable diet: reducing intakes of processed food and meat and dairy and raising intakes of fruit and vegetables, legumes and whole grains.¹⁴
- "Economic growth without attending to its environmental impact, maintaining the status quo, is not an option for the country or for the planet" (Marmot Review, 2010)

Our impact:

The Food for Life Catering Mark provides a comprehensive framework for improving the health and sustainability standards of food served outside the home, and promoting more local sourcing. As of June 2016, over 1.7 million meals that meet Food for Life Catering Mark standards are served each week day, including over 280,000 at Gold. The scheme provides caterers with an incentive to source more sustainably sourced, ethical and local produce.

Silver and Gold standards encourage caterers to serve less (but higher welfare) meat.

2015 spend by Food for Life caterers:



Organic
Over **£9m** p/a
(up £1.9m from 2014)



RSPCA Assured
£1.4m p/a
(up £247,000 from 2014)

Free Range (meat and poultry)



£3m p/a
(up £225,000 from 2014)



MSC
Over **£5m** p/a
(up £1.2m from 2014)



Red Tractor
£40m p/a

Fairtrade
£0.4m p/a
(up £84,000 from 2014)



LEAF
£1.4m p/a
(up £191,000 from 2014)

Working with you to create healthy places

1

With commissioners...

Food for Life can help you join up health, education, food and the community.

We're already achieving clear results throughout England and we'd like to work with you to do the same.

Talk to us about how we can create a bespoke programme that supports your local priorities.

2

With schools, hospitals and early years providers...

A good food culture can offer benefits to all those who are part of your immediate and wider community. Our support packages have been developed to give you the tools you need to make the most of these.

Whether you're an individual organisation or part of a wider group, find out more about how our flexible awards and frameworks will help you make positive changes in ways that work for you.

3

With funders...

Generous support from the Big Lottery Fund allowed us to establish the Food for Life approach and to demonstrate the positive results that the programme has achieved so far.

But there's more to be done.

Third party funding not only allows us to extend the programme's reach, it enables us to campaign for good food and food education at the highest levels.

 www.foodforlife.org.uk  fll@foodforlife.org.uk  0117 314 5180

References

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- 4 - Newton et al (2015) Changes in health in England, with analysis by English regions and areas of deprivation, 1990–2013: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013. The Lancet. www.thelancet.com Published online September 15, 2015 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)00195-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00195-6)
- 5 - World Cancer Research Fund www.wcrf-uk.org
- 6 - National Child Measurement Programme (2013/14) Health and Social Care Information Centre www.hscic.gov.uk/ncmp
- 7 - **How we have calculated this:**
 - ▶ 25% of children aged 5-10 eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day. (Health Survey for England, 2014, 24% of boys and girls at age 5-7, 26% of boys at age 6-10, 27% of girls at age 6-10, 25.25% is the average across these age groups.)
 - ▶ There are 4.2 million (4,233,515) pupils (aged 4-10) enrolled in state-funded and independent primary schools in England. (DfE, Schools, pupils' and their characteristics: January 2015, Data Table 1a)
- 8 - **How we calculated this:**
 - ▶ 7.5% of children aged 5-10 eat less than one portion of fruit and vegetables per day. (Health Survey for England, 2014, 7% aged 5-7 eat less than one portion per day, 8% of children aged 8-10 eat less than one portion per day.)
 - ▶ There are 4.2 million (4,233,515) pupils (aged 4-10) enrolled in state-funded and independent primary schools in England. (DfE, Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2015, Data Table 1a)
 - ▶ Therefore 317,513 primary school children eat less than one portion of fruit and vegetables per day. 33% of 317,513 is 104,779.
- 9 - Orme J et al (2011) Food for Life Partnership Evaluation. UWE Bristol
- 10 - Gray, S, Jones, M, Means, R, Orme, J, Oxford, L, Pitt, H, and Salmon, D. (2015) Evaluating the Food for Life Partnership in New Settings: Final Report. UWE Bristol
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Soil Association
Food for Life
South Plaza
Marlborough Street
Bristol, BS1 3NX

T 0117 314 5180
E ffl@foodforlife.org.uk
www.foodforlife.org.uk
T @SAfoodforlife

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