

## **Cutting queues: secondary schools in Glasgow**

In August 2009, seven secondary schools in Glasgow decided to keep all their 'S1' (year 7) children on site during the lunch break, in a bid to encourage them to make healthier choices. This experiment – dubbed “The Big Eat In” – proved so successful that 17 schools have now signed up.

Keeping children on site immediately increased the pressure on existing canteens, and generated long queues. So the participating schools had to think on their feet. They have adopted a number of clever strategies to minimise queuing times.

First, they increased the number of tills in their canteens. Next, they opened a number of collapsible kiosks in other areas around the school, and at the school gate. At first these kiosks could only provide ambient food, but now they have developed hot and chilled food services.

Finally, some schools opened separate café units serving healthy, hot food. The cafés, run by the local authority, each serve 300-350 customers, and have recouped their initial start-up costs within a year.

Some schools in England are using the same strategies, with the help of private companies. PKL Food Cubes, for example, sets up food kiosks in schools using the catering units they previously supplied to the London Olympics.