



Case study: Haworth Primary School – improving lunchtime experience to increase school meal take up.

Haworth Primary School is situated in Keighley, a medium-sized town in West Yorkshire. The school has around 260 pupils on its roll and has achieved Gold with the Food for Life Partnership.

The school's Food for Life Partnership journey started with their gardening club and now, thanks to support from the FFLP framework, cooking, growing and learning about where food comes are at the heart of the school curriculum. Active community involvement and giving their pupils voice have been key to their success. Parents are also involved with cooking and growing and the school keeps their own chickens alongside holding regular visits to their local farms.

Their Food for Life Partnership work was cited as a positive contribution to a number of points in the school's recent 'Outstanding' Ofsted report.

Taking up the school meal challenge

Increasing the take up of school meals was one of the more challenging aspects to achieving their award. They learned that providing healthy and tasty food would only increase meal take up if it went hand-in-hand with some overall improvements to the lunchtime experience.

With a high level of input from pupils, parents and staff, the school successfully introduced a number of initiatives with over half of their pupils now enjoying a freshly prepared, nutritious school dinner.

How they made lunchtime a better experience

1. The school made a number of small yet significant changes to its dining room. At pupils' suggestion, they introduced brightly coloured tablecloths, a salad trolley, a new waste trolley and display boards highlighting organic and local produce in the school meals. The diner's blinds have been repainted and cutlery is now placed in a holder on the tables. Lunch times are staggered, putting an end to long queues, and a traffic light chatter tracker has been introduced, which motivates pupils to be quieter.
2. Throughout the year, the school puts on themed lunches to celebrate various festivals and events. These have included Sports Day picnic, Divali, World Book Day, World Maths Day, the World Cup, Easter, Fairtrade Day, Christmas, Green Day and Vegetarian Day. There are also food tasting lessons, giving children the opportunity to sample sustainable fish and farm assured meat.
3. Parents are invited to lunch twice a year, allowing them to see the quality of the food and dining experience first-hand. To encourage take up amongst reception children, parents are offered a sample school meal at the open evening.
4. Bradford Facilities Management Services, the local authority caterer that supplies the school meals, works with Haworth to encourage take up. They also fund 20 school meals for reception children during the first half term.
5. The school regularly surveys parents and its pupils to find out more about the children's likes, dislikes and dietary requirements. The School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) comprising pupils, teachers, catering staff and parents meet every half term to discuss new and existing initiatives.
6. Demonstrating the benefits of a whole school approach, the children help to prepare produce grown in the school garden so that it can be used in school meals.

What the pupils say:

What better way to find out how the Gold dining experience is being received than to ask the pupils themselves. Here's what some of the children at Haworth have to say:

"It's really good. The cutlery is much easier," - Max Furness.

"It's bright and colourful. A place that's nice to eat!" -Mark Harris

"It's more organised." - Claire Chapman

"Really, really nice, it makes you want to eat!" - Jess Green

"I like the tables. Our visitors will know we are a healthy school." - Taigen Crossley

Notes:

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Pupils on roll: 255



