

Bite



Food in Schools Magazine

Welcome to Bite, our Food in Schools magazine. This magazine aims to keep schools up to date with the latest information on what's happening with school food, resources available and to provide an opportunity to share examples of how a whole school approach can improve the nutrition and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

All over Northern Ireland, improvements in healthy eating have been taking place within schools as a result of successful breakfast clubs, greater compliance with Nutritional Standards for school lunches and other food and drink; alongside healthy breaks and packed lunch policies; and a stronger emphasis on healthy eating. Some of these improvements were reflected in the results of the 2015 Food in Schools Monitoring survey, which was conducted to measure the implementation of the Food in Schools Monitoring Survey. The results of this survey can be seen presented as an infographic on page two.

The Food in Schools Policy, which was introduced in 2013, is an overarching policy which advocates a 'whole school approach' to food and nutrition in schools, and incorporates all aspects - from food and drinks provided and consumed in schools, to developing the knowledge and skills of children and young people in relation to healthy eating and lifestyles.

For this issue of Bite, examples of best practice including breakfast clubs, the valuable role of a school council, staff wellbeing and whole-school health and wellbeing initiatives, have been gathered to demonstrate how many aspects can be considered when auditing or reviewing Food in Schools Policy.

Food in Schools continues to support schools with resources such as C2k Fronter room 'food@my school' and videoconference sessions linked to the curriculum. All dates can be found within the C2k Media Library and membership is available to all teachers by emailing Katie.Hunter@eani.org.uk with a C2k email address.

APPOINTMENT OF FOOD IN SCHOOLS COORDINATOR - MATERNITY COVER

Katie Hunter is currently covering the role of Regional Food in Schools Coordinator whilst Judith Hanvey is on Maternity leave following the birth of her second son, Lewis.

Katie is a registered Dietitian and her role is to provide specialist and practical support to all schools, the Education Authority and to our Health and Social Care partners on the implementation of the Food in Schools Policy. Katie has previously covered the role of Regional Food in Schools Coordinator and again, will continue Judith's work to further develop and implement the Food in Schools agenda.

If you would like to speak to Katie, please do so by emailing Katie.Hunter@eani.org.uk or phone 07733 101772

Food in Schools



Department of
Education

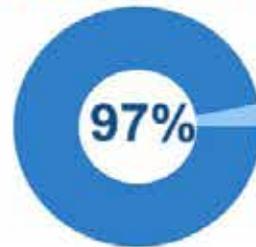
www.education-ni.gov.uk

Key results from the 2015 Food in Schools monitoring survey

Schools reporting that they are either fully compliant with Nutritional Standards or making good progress towards compliance with them.



School lunches



Other food and drink in school

4 in 5 schools specifically encourage pupils to bring only healthy options for lunch



Almost **7 in 10** schools reported not using sweets as a reward for pupils

95% of pupils have easy access to free, fresh drinking water at all times



83% of schools have a written school food /healthy eating policy

BREAKFAST CLUB AWARDS SUCCESS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Breakfast Clubs provide so many benefits, from improved attendance and educational attainment, to tackling hunger in the morning and providing pre-school care.

To celebrate the dedication and hard work that goes into running a great Breakfast Club, Kellogg's have been awarding Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards, which includes a category for Best Breakfast Club in Northern Ireland.



Winner 2016: St Kevin's Primary School, Belfast

Set up in 2011 using a Kellogg's start-up fund, St Kevin's Primary School Breakfast Club provides a fun and enriching environment for more than 60 children per day. The club has made a significant impact on children's behaviour, confidence, punctuality and results in the classroom, thanks to the support of the dedicated staff at St Kevin's and the hearty breakfasts provided each morning.

The judges were particularly impressed by the parents and grandparents involvement in the club's activities. Mums, dads, grannies and grandpas are invited to 'special breakfasts' throughout the year, joining in with games, reading and of course, sharing breakfast together. Principal John McComb said:

"We are absolutely delighted to be the Grand Winners. Our success is testimony to our members of staff and to our parent volunteers, without whom the club wouldn't be such a success".

With the £2000 prize money, the club will be stocked up with new games, books and even iPads that will host an app called Take Ten. The app is proven to reduce anxiety and stress, which the team at St Kevin's will introduce to give children the best possible start to the day.



Winner 2017: St Mary's Primary School, Belfast

St Mary's Primary School in Divis Street, close to Belfast City Centre, is delighted to have been named winners of the Kellogg's Northern Ireland Breakfast Club of the Year for 2017. Mrs Mary Harbinson, Principal of St Mary's is obviously delighted that their breakfast club has been recognised:

"Our breakfast club is a community hub. The majority of our pupils are drawn from Belfast's growing Newcomer population (the majority of whom are Romanian Roma) and for parents, as well as children, the Breakfast Club is their first introduction to our school in particular, and education in general. A friendly, welcoming atmosphere allows pupils to feel supported and happy as they sit together to eat or play. Parents can leave the children knowing they have a 'Breakfast Buddy' and caring staff happy to help. Over 40% of our pupils are Traveller children, often with interrupted education, who find the breakfast club a place to make friendships and to enjoy playing, exercising and a healthy start to the day."

The award also recognises the contribution that the St Mary's Breakfast Club makes to improve the health of the children it serves:

"The children who attend our breakfast club have little knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices. We have high levels of childhood obesity, poor dental hygiene

and low levels of exercise. Some of this reflects cultural norms, some is due to a lack of understanding of the need to balance diet and exercise, and some is as a result of marginalisation, which makes parents unwilling to allow their children to join sport and activity clubs outside the safety of their community or our school. Having activity sessions during breakfast club has allowed us to support pupils, and in turn their families, to develop more active lifestyles and to promote the benefit of healthy eating habits.

Our pupils have had opportunities to participate in football, boxercise, walking and aerobic fitness sessions as part of our 'Active Breakfast'. Our 'Breakfast Bake In' provides opportunities for our pupils to learn to cook with healthy ingredients and the need for a more balanced diet. Through the breakfast club our pupils have become more active. They wear step trackers and compete to have the most steps for the week.

Living a healthy lifestyle is the message our breakfast club promotes and it is a message that stretches beyond the club, the school and even home to reach entire communities that haven't really considered that a healthy lifestyle could be a realistic goal."



STAFF WELLBEING IN THE BELFAST BOYS' MODEL SCHOOL

June 2017 saw a Staff Wellbeing Activity Afternoon in the Belfast Boys' Model School. This was just the latest in a long line of innovations that have been put in place to help promote wellbeing and further enhance the collegiate approach within the school.

During the afternoon, a number of different activities were organised. These included arm and hand massage, facials, football, manicures, 'Ready, steady, cook', a walking tour of the local area and yoga.

Staff enjoyed one of these activities for forty-five minutes and then gathered together in the staffroom for an afternoon tea to finish the event. Feedback gathered at the time was extremely positive, with other activities already being suggested for the next activity afternoon!

The staff wellbeing team in the Belfast Boys' Model School was established to look at a range of issues that are important to all personnel and to try to ensure that everyone feels content and valued within their particular area. A cross-section of the whole school staff makes up the wellbeing team, with teachers, teaching assistants and support staff all being represented.

Over the last few years, in response to suggestions, the team has provided items such as:

- ♦ *Wet weather apparel for duty* ♦ *Jump leads in case of car trouble*
- ♦ *Cold Comfort Kit to help when feeling poorly*
- ♦ *Female Comfort Kit for emergency supplies*
- ♦ *Flu vaccines through Boots the Chemist*
- ♦ *Stress Management workshop*

In addition to the new 'Activity Afternoon', there are other events organised to encourage as many staff as possible to get together in a social setting. These include:

- ♦ *The big breakfast, which takes place on the morning after the school open night*
- ♦ *Staff lunches and charity coffee mornings*

The team also undertake an annual staff survey to gather feedback from everyone and to help with planning for the year. A news sheet is then produced to share the results.

The school believes that a recognised commitment to wellbeing leads to a more cohesive and open staff, which in turn helps to promote an overall ethos of caring and support that is reflected in the work with the pupils. By demonstrating strong, amicable and positive relationships, it helps the students understand and appreciate the idea of community and the security and encouragement that it can provide.

Promoting staff wellbeing works to improve the school experience for everyone.



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School councils and School Nutrition Action Groups (SNAGs) are successful models that many schools use to ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in their school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors.

A school council can facilitate discussion, provide a clear audit of the role and profile of food and drink in any school and engage all stakeholders towards implementing successful outcomes.

Mrs Sara Long, Education Authority Director of Operations and Estates, and Mrs Veronica Woods, Area catering Manager, were recently invited to attend a school council meeting at St Francis Primary School in Lurgan with the principal Mr Anthony McMarrow and pupils.

The pupils discussed their findings of a class survey on school meals which they had conducted throughout the school and then asked various questions on guidelines and implementation in relation to school food. Mrs Long welcomed the opportunity to engage with the pupils and answer questions.

The outcome of the meeting was very positive with agreed events put in place for an end of term theme day and a food tasting morning arranged by the school cook supervisor, where samples of soups requested by the children will be provided.

The school meals service will continue to work with the pupils, encouraging their understanding and responsibility for healthy eating and nutritionally balanced menus.





**Our Lady Of Lourdes
School Ballymoney**

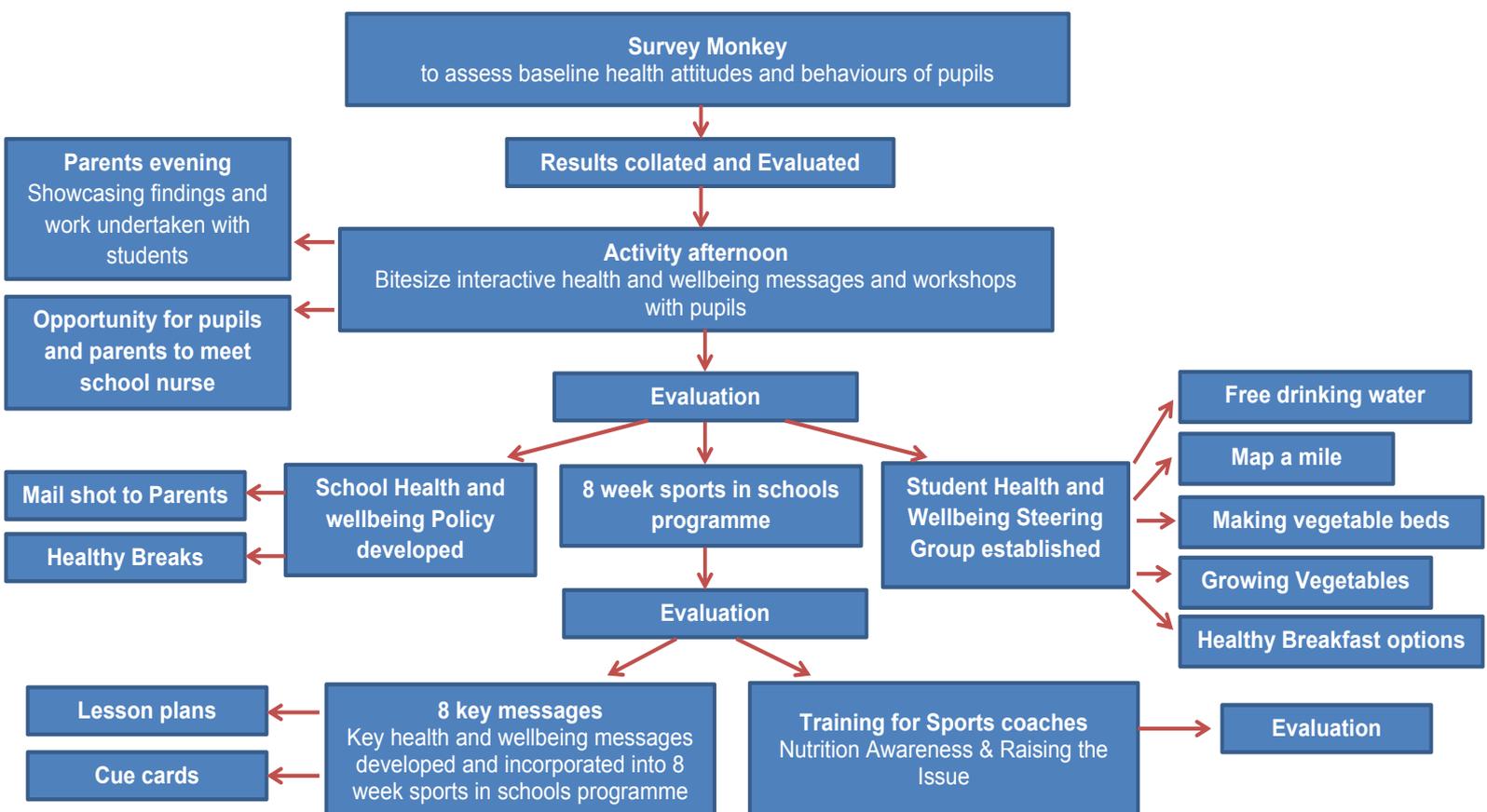
Caring, Sharing, Learning together to meet the future



Our Lady of Lourdes School, Ballymoney, hosted a pilot project with Year 8 students in the academic year 2016/17. The transition to post-primary education provides an ideal opportunity to positively influence the development of healthy lifestyle habits and stem the increasing incidence of overweight and obesity throughout childhood and adolescence into adulthood.

This pilot was led by the Northern Obesity Partnership (NOP) working with partners from the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (including School Nursing, Dietetics and Health and Wellbeing teams), Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council to deliver collectively on the important health messages encompassing nutrition, physical activity and emotional wellbeing.

The diagram below shows the multi-agency, multi-disciplinary partnership process, highlighting the importance of regular evaluation to inform the development of interventions and the creation of outputs.



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Pupils in Year 8 enjoying the physical activity sessions; using pedal power to make a smoothie with Sandra Anderson (CYPSP); and working with The Conservation Volunteers to make raised beds for growing fruit and vegetables in the school grounds.

This case study and accompanying resources will be adapted to roll out to two further post-primary schools in the academic year 2017-2018 and will be made available on the 'food @my school' Fronter room soon.

This article was developed by the Northern Obesity Partnership. If you are interested in learning more about this project, the resources developed and how your school could utilise them, please contact Sandra Anderson, Participation Development Officer CYPSP:

SandraL.Anderson@northerntrust.hscni.net



ST JOSEPH'S COMES OUT ON TOP IN NUTRITION COMPETITION!

Home economics students at St Joseph's Boys School, Derry, celebrate winning a Nutrition Competition run by the Food Standards Agency in NI and Safefood.

The competition was based around the new 'What's on a Label?' resource, which assists Home Economics teachers in delivering the food labelling content of the GCSE GCE Home Economics specifications.

Anne-Marie Chambers from the FSA presented St Joseph's students, Odhran Harkin and Ethan Teague with a free iPad for the school.

Home Economics tutor Collette McNicholl said: *"We are really pleased to have won this competition. This is the first year they have offered GCSE Home Economics at the school, and it has proved very popular."*

(L-R) Odhran Harkin, Anne-Marie Chambers from the FSA, Home Economics tutor Collette McNicholl and Ethan Teague

