

Changes to The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020



Health & Wellbeing Is Important to Us

Introduction

The current Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 have been in place in all schools since 2009. Whilst those Regulations have been instrumental in bringing about much positive change, the Scottish Government wants to ensure that our children and young people continue to be offered food and drink that reflects the latest scientific evidence and dietary advice on food health and nutrition. The new Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020, which takes effect on **8 April 2021**, is aligned more closely to the Scottish Dietary Goals.

Education authorities are ultimately responsible for ensuring all food and drink provided comply fully with the Regulations. However, everyone involved with providing food and drink on school premises can play a part in supporting compliance by making themselves aware of the requirements.

Under the regulations authorities have a duty to:

Promote school lunches, in particular free school lunches

Protect anonymity of free meal entitled children and young people

Ensure all food and drink provided in schools complies with the nutritional requirements

Ensure drinking water is provided free of charge at all times



The food and drink standards apply to all food and drink provided to pupils at any time of the day including:

- Lunch time
- Breakfast clubs
- Tuck shops
- Vending machines
- Mid-morning services,
- Community cafes serving children and young people during the school day.
- Before/after school clubs
- Holiday Clubs
- Parent council events
- Charity /fund raising events

There are circumstances in which the Regulations do not apply, however, when deciding to apply these exemptions, consideration should be given to the ethos of the health promoting school as set out in the 2000 Act.

- Children and young people bringing food and drinks on site
- Food and drink being used in teaching or food preparation and cooking skills
- Food and drink being provided as part of a medically prescribed diet
- Food and drink provided in nurseries and early years centres.
- Food or drink provided as part of a social, cultural or recreational activity, frequency should be managed across the school year to deliver a balanced approach.

How do the Regulations support children and young people to make appropriate dietary choices and learn about health and wellbeing?

Evidence based information complements the learning children and young people receive about Health and Wellbeing through Curriculum for Excellence¹⁰.

In particular, the food and health experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) aim to provide children and young people with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make balanced food and drink choices aligned to current dietary advice. The Regulations can complement this by illustrating what balanced and nutritious food and drink can look like over the course of a week.

CfE also emphasises that health and wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff who work in schools and should permeate all aspects of the school day.

Better Eating, Better Learning - a new context for school food further supports this aim by demonstrating how joint working can drive further improvements to both food provision and food education.



What are the key changes to the regulations?

The food-based standards and regulations have been changed to minimise the risk to the health of children and young people

- Maximum level for provision of red and red processed meat across the school week in order to align with current dietary advice.
- Promote the benefits of and increase consumption of fruit and vegetables focusing on portion sizes and availability.
- All bread, bread rolls and breakfast cereals now need to meet a new minimum requirement of 3g fibre per 100g.
- Sweetened baked goods and desserts, fromage frais, yoghurt and other milk based desserts, and breakfast cereal will now need to meet the criteria set for these new standards.
- Fruit juice, smoothies and combination fruit and vegetable drinks can no longer be provided.
- Lower fat (for example semi-skimmed and skimmed) milk drinks (such as hot chocolate, flavoured milk and drinking yoghurts) will no longer be allowed to contain added sugar.
- Limit how often pastry products can be provided across the school week
- Sugar-free soft drinks can now be provided in secondary school setting only.