

Checklist for Schools to Support Healthy Hot School Meals

The objective of the hot school meal scheme is to provide regular NUTRITIOUS food to children. It is the school's responsibility to source a food supplier that adheres to the national [Nutrition Standards for Hot School Meals](https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/15978/6ade4b9f4810445e8c6516b3a33d330b.pdf) (<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/15978/6ade4b9f4810445e8c6516b3a33d330b.pdf>)



Adherence with these standards is part of the service level agreements between the school and the Department of Social Protection and the food supplier.

The following is a summary checklist which you can use with your supplier to ensure the meals they offer are in adherence with the standards. Any issues identified should be raised with your supplier.

1. **Every hot school meal option contains the following:** (see food pyramid serving sizes)
 - 2 servings of vegetables, salad or fruit ☐
 - 1 serving of wholemeal cereal / bread, or potato/ pasta/ rice ☐
 - 1 serving of meat / poultry/ fish / eggs or beans/ nuts ☐
2. Any **processed meats** limited as a choice to once per week maximum, if at all (ham, chicken goujons/ nuggets, sausages, bacon etc.) ☐
3. Any **fried foods** is limited as a choice to once per week maximum, if at all (chips/ potato cubes, garlic bread, fried fish or a meal containing pastry etc.) ☐
4. **Red meat** (beef, lamb, pork (not sausages or ham) is an option at least 2 days /week ☐
5. Breads/ rolls/ cereals should be **wholemeal** ☐
6. Dishes, such as curries, lasagne, rolls should contain at least ½ portion of vegetables/ salad (40g) ☐
7. **Vegetarian** option is available every day if required. (cheese as option no more than twice /week) ☐
8. **Fresh drinking water** is available at all times. ☐
9. **Portion sizes** are age appropriate (see page 2 of standards for guidance) ☐
10. **Confectionary is NOT served** on any day (muffins, croissant, cake, biscuits) ☐

Note to School Administrators:

There are **TWO** Service Level Agreements (SLA) signed by your school, as part of the process of implementing the hot school meals scheme:

1. The first is the SLA between the department of social protection (providing the funding) and the school, this refers to the national nutrition standards for Hot School Meals & states that it is the school's responsibility to ensure they are:

- a) **providing only healthy and nutritious food items**
- b) providing food of a suitable nutritional quality, prepared in suitable surroundings
- c) **implementing a healthy eating policy**
- d) adhering to all public procurement rules and guidelines

2. The second SLA is between the school and their chosen company to provide the meals. There is a template for you to use from the School Procurement Unit which refers to the provider adhering to the national nutrition standards for Hot School Meals– see <https://www.spu.ie/school-meals-scheme/>

Remember to share your school Food/ Healthy Eating Policy with any prospective supplier!

Further information on the school meals scheme:

- <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/29a3ff-school-meals-scheme/>

Further details on the national [Nutrition Standards for Hot School Meals](#)

- <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/15978/6ade4b9f4810445e8c6516b3a33d330b.pdf>

