New Term – Schools Catering Update

Universal Free School Meals

Since August 2021, we have been delivering UFSM to all P4 pupils and from January 2022 we have been delivering UFSM to P5's. In many of our schools' uptake is incredibly high (averaging 90%). As you may recall from the December update, the council requested significant capital funding to upgrade kitchen and dining halls to cope with the additional demand. Unfortunately, there has been no settlement from the Scottish Government to allow us to move forward with the many schools we had earmarked for expansion. We are also not clear about the expected delivery dates of lunches to P6 and P7, which were initially planned for August of this year.

From August 2022, all special school pupils will also be entitled to a free school meal (inclusive of secondary special school provision). Attached to this memo is some guidance on recording of these meals and a line to include in memos or newsletters to inform parents of this change.

Catering Service Information

The catering service has produced a short presentation on the services we provide to schools, and this can be shared on your website or blogs. This presentation provides a helpful overview of the range of services we provide and the strive to improve pupils learning outcomes through the quality of a nutritional lunch. (This will be on the web)

Cashless Catering

CGI are currently creating the new PIN listings for new S1's and these lists will be sent to Business Managers within the next 2 weeks.
In Primary Schools, please remember to adjust the school meal prices and set the term dates on ParentPay. Please note if anyone requires further ParentPay support, they are to contact Arlene Davidson. New prices are attached with this memo.

Menus

Our new menus were launched in April and runs for a full calendar year. For those in CEC managed schools, hard copies of the new menus will be arriving in the coming days for distribution to pupils. Kitchen will have also received large menu posters. If you require any further posters, please contact your field supervisor.

A reminder to all schools that the new school food standards apply throughout the full day. More information on the new standards can be found here:
https://www.gov.scot/publications/healthy-eating-schools-guidance-2020/

We have also attached with this memo, a training pack that can be shared with staff/HFT leads, as it is vital with these regs, that the whole school population are aware.

Our high school unit managers have been working incredibly hard to promote uptake in school. Across our high school estate, we are bucking the national trend of falling levels of uptake in high school and reported at 11% growth in meal numbers in May. We need

your help to continue the good work that is already going on in high schools, such as promoting menus at registration or HFT leads working with the unit manager to link education and the school meal service.

Ongoing Supply Chain Issues

We continue to experience some supply chain challenges. As you all may be aware, at the tail end of last year the focus was on product shortages however, this year the picture is mainly around price increases. On average across all food categories, we are seeing an increase of 9% with further increases expected in October. Food producers are significant users of energy, so we are seeing a direct corelation between increases in fuel/energy costs and the price increases we are recording.

Allergen Champions

The service has recently invested in training for managers on the growing importance of allergen adherence. We now have 12 allergen champions across the service who will be conducting training with school catering staff throughout the next term. As a service we have seen a 300% increase in special diets over the last 4 years. So, it is vitally important we are working together to ensure we have updated records of all new pupils with special diets and that any leavers are removed from the special diet process.

Single Use Plastics

From the start of the new academic term, the single-use plastic items listed below will be banned from all council buildings to allow us to comply with Scottish Government Legislation.

The new regulations from the Scottish Government published in November 2021 stipulates that some problematic single-use plastic items (as listed below) will be banned. This follows the publication of the draft regulations in March 2021 ibn conjunction with a twelve-week public consultation that ended in January 2021. A report with findings from the public consultation is available. The regulations mean that market restrictions (effectively a ban) will be imposed on problematic single-use plastic.

The ban means it is unlawful to make and supply commercially any of the following single-use plastic items:

- Cutlery (forks, knives, spoons, chopsticks and other similar utensils)
- Plates
- Beverage stirrers
- Food containers made of expanded polystyrene
- Cups made of expanded polystyrene.

Getting ready for the new legislation

Now regulations have been published, the council have been working with our contracted supplier INSTOCK to update the catalogue with all compliant products from the 7th of June. For ease of reference a new list has been attached.

If you have any queries about the new legislation or have a specific business need for any of the items above, contact catering.communications@edinburgh.gov.uk

Special Diet Policy

A reminder of the special diet policy is attached with this memo. Please ensure you capture all new pupils with special diets and remove any leavers. We have altered the special diet form to comply with GDPR regulations. A doctor's note or signature must accompany a special diet form to ensure our cooks have accurate information and do not place pupils in un-due risk. We publish all our allergens online at: https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/food-clothing/lunch-menus-schools/1

Catering Team Contacts

- **North West Locality**
  Morag Best – Area Manager, morag.best@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Fiona Buckley – Field Supervisor, fiona.buckley@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **South West Locality**
  Eric Taylor – Area Manager, eric.taylor@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Elaine Robertson – Field Supervisor, elaine.robertson@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **North East Locality**
  Prasun Barman – Area Manager, prasun.barman@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Field Supervisor – Liam Barbour, liam.barbour@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **South East Locality**
  Elizabeth Hetherington – Area Manager
  elizabeth.hetherington@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Field Supervisor – Lorna McKenna, lorna.mckenna@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Many of you in the East of the city will know our Area Manager Grace Lambert. Grace is retiring after 32 years with the council. She is finishing up at the end of term and will be a huge loss to our service!

- **General Food Enquiries** – Admin Team, foodinschools@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Menu Development Officer - Julie Donaldson, julie.donaldson@edinburgh.gov.uk
  Laura Nisbet, Educational link, Food & Health development officer, laura.nisbet@edinburgh.gov.uk

Any of our team would be happy to assist and work with your schools to develop the food offer in school. Your catering manager on site, or any of the management team will be happy to attend any pupil council groups or eco groups to discuss the role of the catering service.

As this term comes to an end, I would like to wish you all a wonderful break. Thank you as always for working with our team to make the school meal service such an integral part of your school!
Best Wishes and Happy Holidays

Chris Ross
Catering Operations Manager