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## **LACA Spring Update**

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**Anita Brown  
National Chair**





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# LACA

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# Keeping in Touch

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National Steering Group (NSG) - monthly

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LACA Board - quarterly

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Chair's call - weekly

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FGS Global - weekly

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Department for Education (DfE) Calls - monthly

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Vice Chair – Regional Co-Ordinator remit

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School Food Reference Group – LACA

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All Party Palimentary Group (APPG) School Food

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LACA Business Director Call - weekly



# Social Media Content

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## LACA - The School Food People

LACA members sit at the heart of school food delivery, representing over 3,300 different organisations and individuals.

Food and Beverage Services  
Chester, Cheshire • 1,814 followers



## LACA

1.7K likes • 1.7K followers



## LACA

@LACA\_UK

LACA - The School Food People. Representing 3,300 different organisations providing 3 million lunches in 22,000 schools everyday 🍴👩🍳👨🍳

📍 Nationwide 🌐 [laca.co.uk](http://laca.co.uk) 📅 Joined November 2009

5,794 Following 7,926 Followers



362 Posts

1,029 Followers

1,205 Following

## LACA

📍 laca\_uk

## School

LACA - The School Food People 🍴  
Representing 3,300 different organisations providing 3 million lunches in 22,000 schools everyday 👩🍳 👨🍳



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# Chair's Priorities

Due to the current cost of living crisis, it has been agreed by NSG and the Board to continue moving forward with the 'If not now, when?' campaign, as funding continues to be the focus of what we are all trying to achieve.

Therefore, my main objectives for the coming year will be as follows:-

1. Prioritise and continue with the **'If not now, When?'** campaign, the focus being the differences in funding across the four nations
2. Focus on delivery and launch – **"The sums don't add up"** campaign
3. Campaign to increase UIFSM and FSM, which should actually link with the current inflation rates
4. Continue the focus with Government, on offering FSM to all families who are in receipt of Universal Credit
5. Visit all regions, to offer updates and provide any help or support we can.
6. Champion all that LACA has achieved and is continuing to achieve, on a political stage and also with the support for all the teams and frontline staff.



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Regular member surveys support LACA's campaign to highlight the issues and extreme pressures being experienced by all school food providers.

This feedback from our members supports our continued to work with the Government, media and the wider industry.

Increasingly LACA are now the "go-to" organisation for media to get real time, accurate data to understand and demonstrate the current pressures on the school food industry and also for us to share the great work you, our members and Partners, are committed to every day.

Details and reports can be found in the Members Section of the LACA website

[LACA Research Reports | LACA](#)





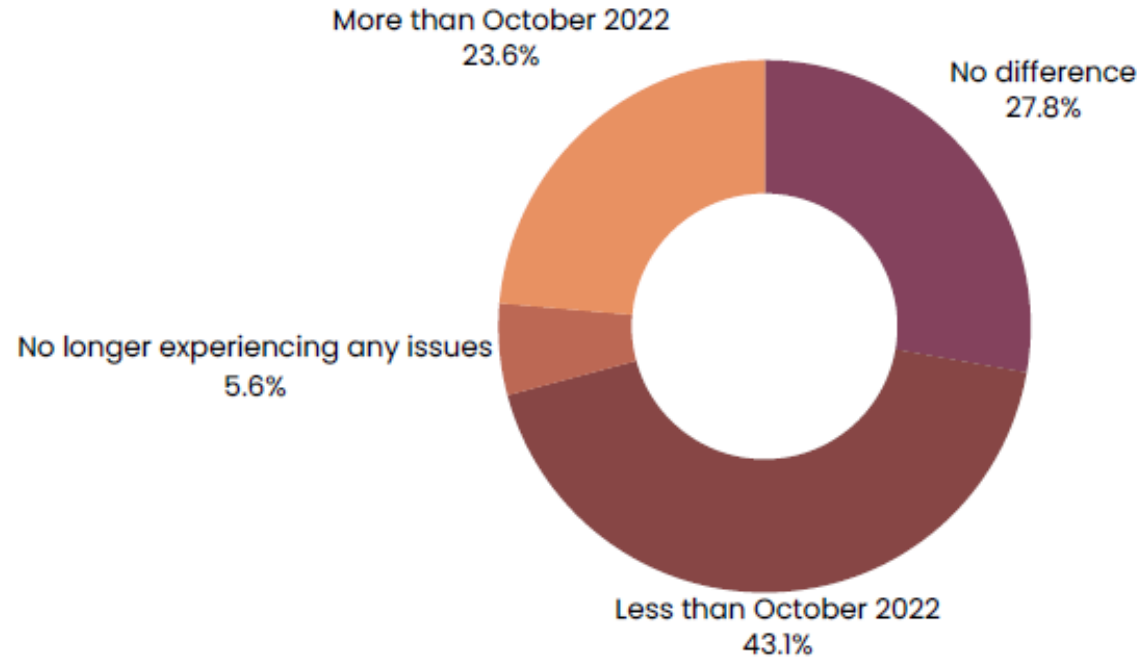
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# What did you say?

**94%** of survey respondents are still experiencing food shortages and substitutions from their supply chain.



We asked how this compared to **October 2022** with **51%** of respondents saying the situation had not changed or had worsened.







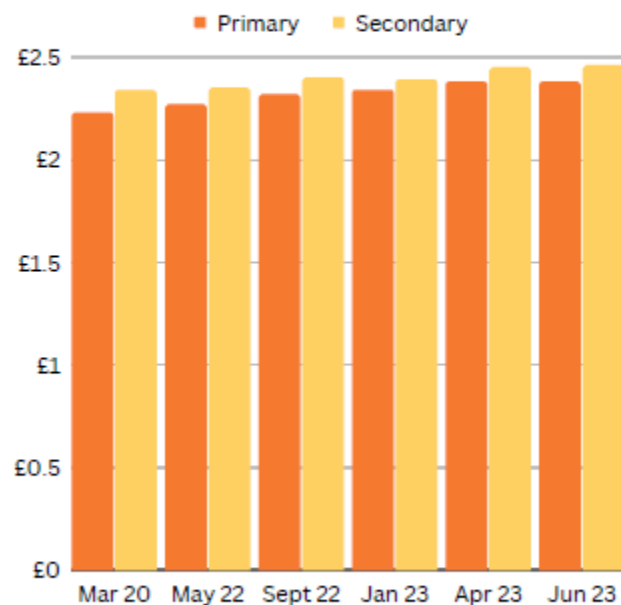


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# Meal prices

We asked our respondents to provide the selling price of the 'paid for meal / meal of the day since March 2020 in their primary schools and secondary schools.

Date	Primary	Secondary
March 2020	£2.23	£2.32
Sept 2022	£2.32	£2.40
January 2023	£2.34	£2.39
April 2023	£2.38	£2.45
June 2023	£2.38	£2.46
Sept 2023	£2.52	£2.51



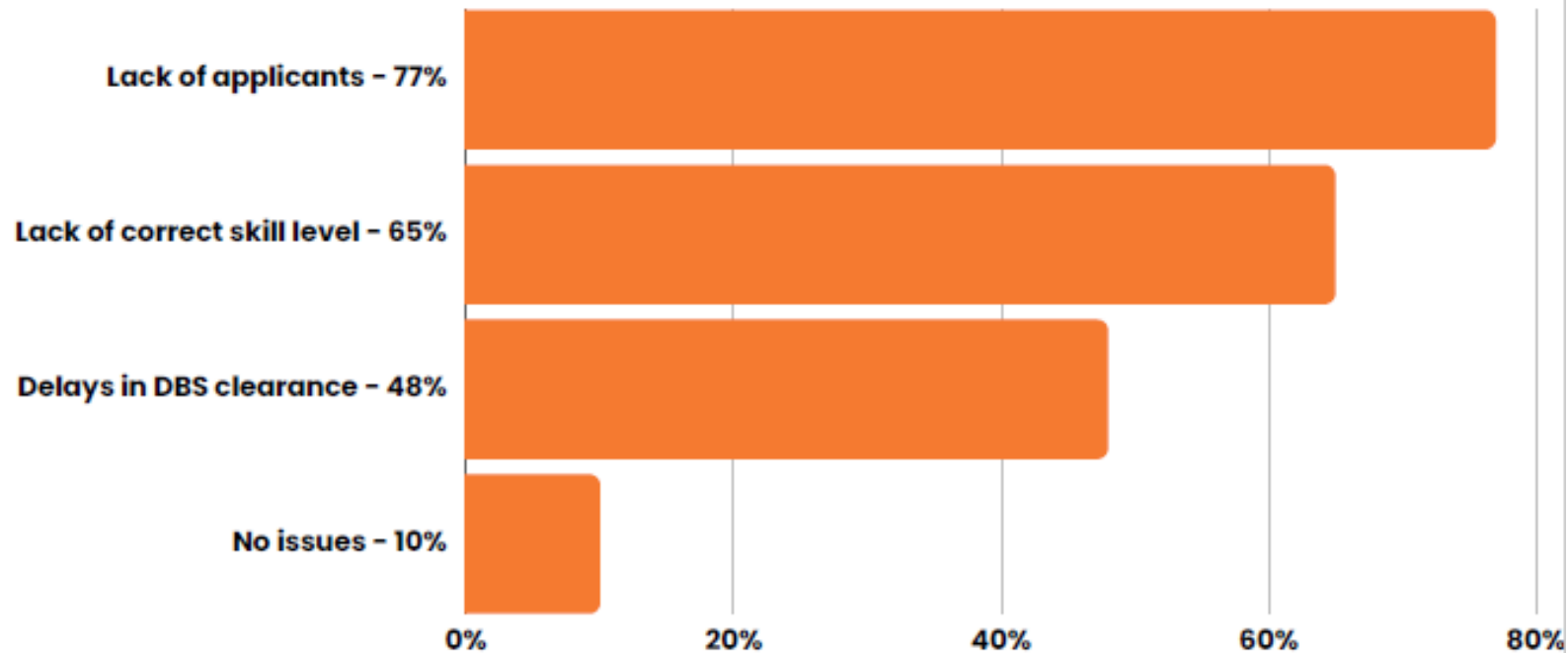
On average, the price of a meal has **increased by 10.6% since March 2020** with further increases expected.



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# Recruitment

## Are you experiencing recruitment challenges?



Over **90%** of respondents said that, **compared to October 2022** the situation had not changed or actually got worse.

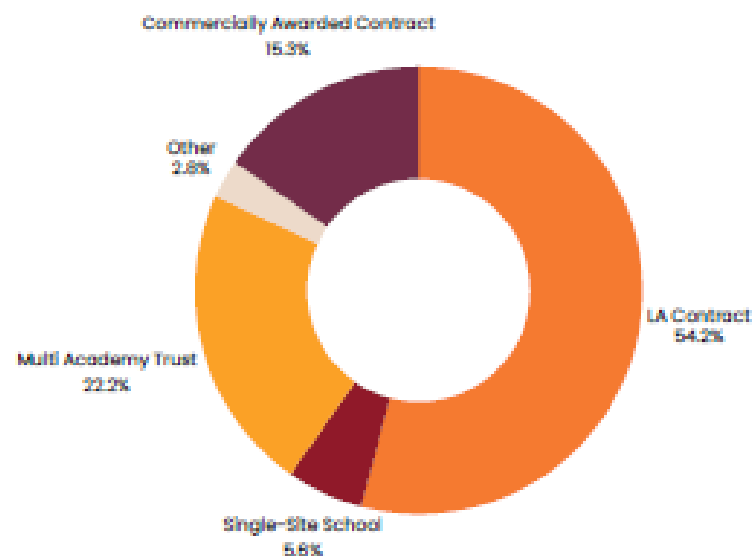
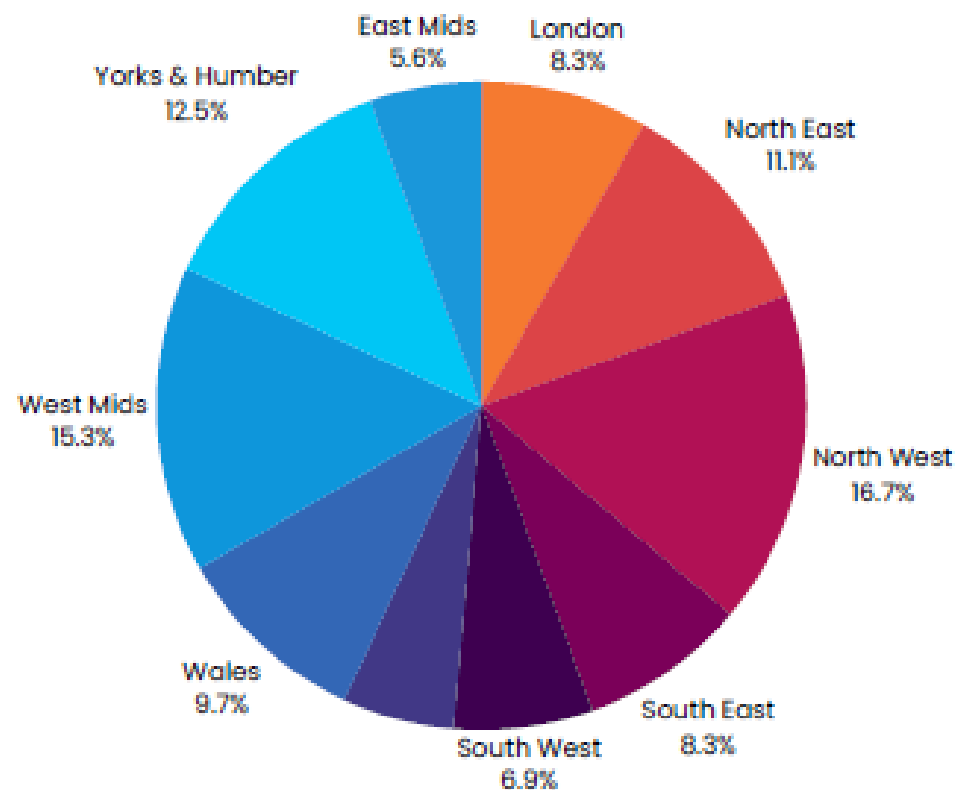


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# What are members telling us?

74 respondents across the LACA membership ranging from single-site providers, LA's and large commercial providers from England & Wales completed the survey.

**These respondents provide services across more than 7,880 schools feeding over 1.4 million pupils every day.**

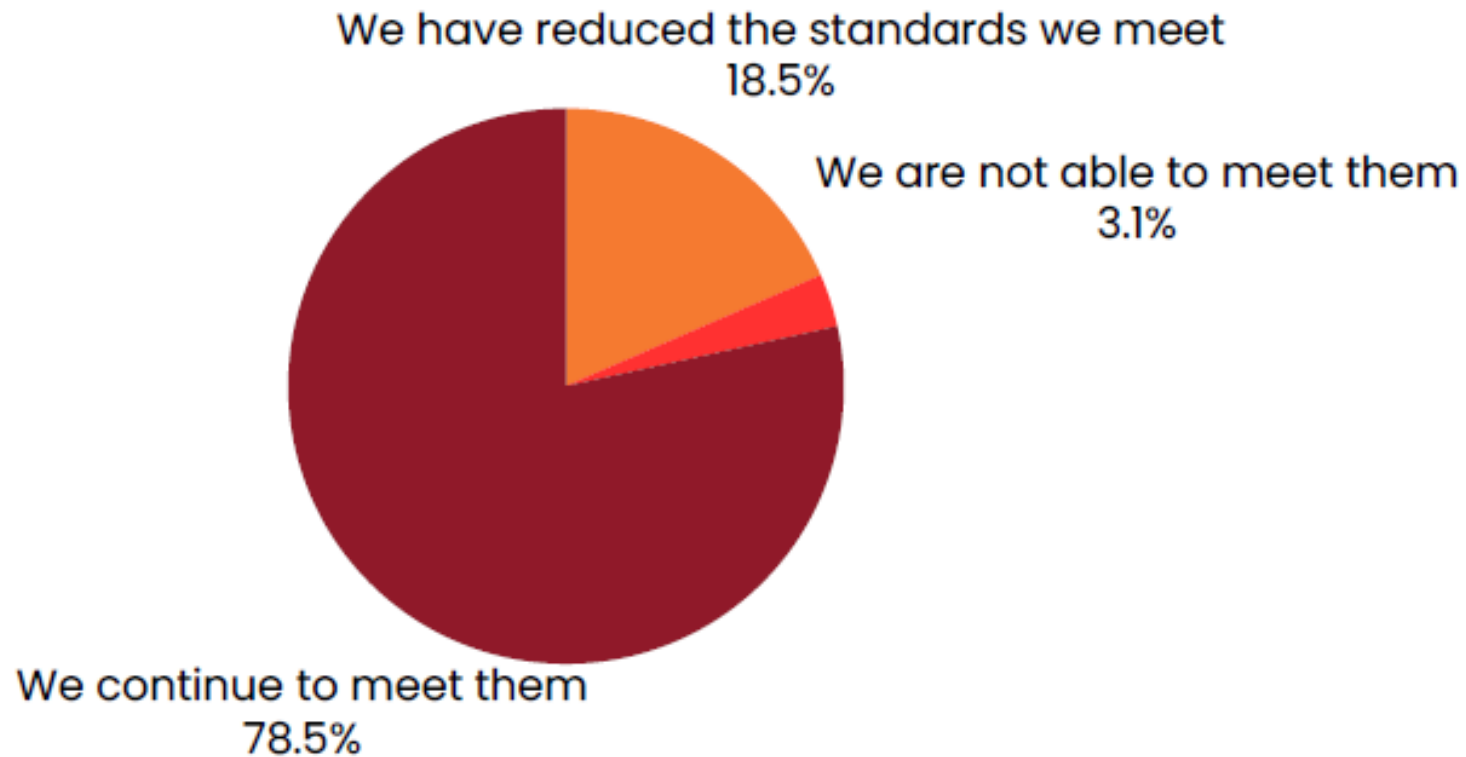




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# School Food Standards

**We asked, how has the rising cost of food affected your ability to meet the mandatory School Food Standards over the last 12 months?**





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# Campaigning

**THE SUMS DON'T ADD UP!**

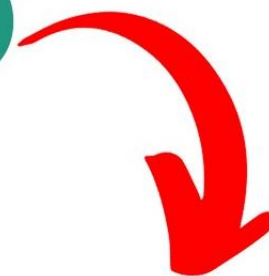
LACA campaign plan: Increasing awareness of the school meal funding gap across the 4 nations



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# Funding Allocations

## SHORT CHANGED



SCOTLAND  
£3.30



WALES  
£2.90



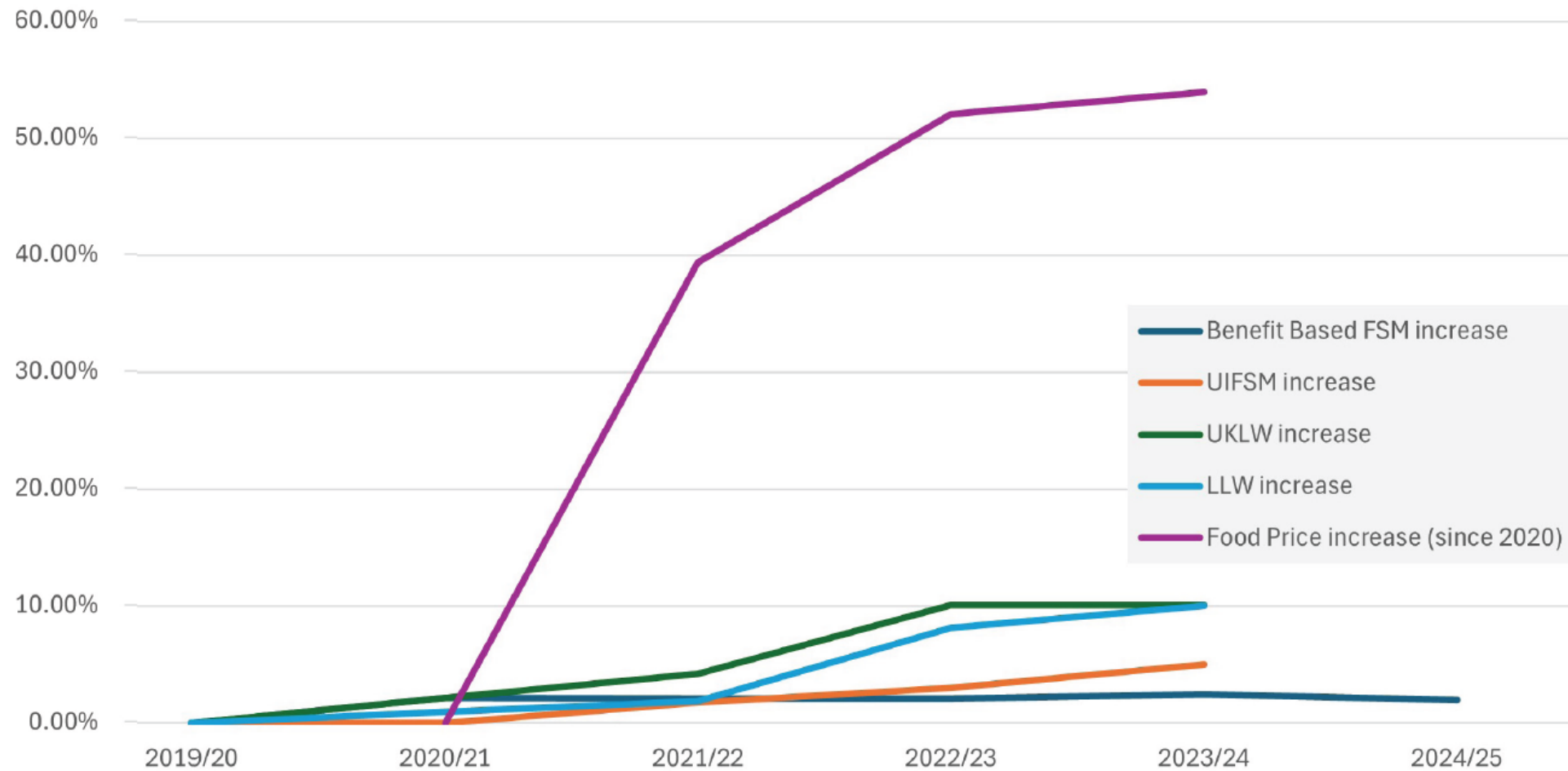
N. IRELAND  
£2.60



ENGLAND  
£2.53



# Funding Comparisons and Food Prices 2019-2024







# 'The Great School Lunch 2024'

Modern day school food - Try, Taste, Talk, Take Action



Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – House of Commons



## 'The Great School Lunch 2024'

Modern day school food - Try, Taste, Talk, Take Action

During the event at the House of Commons LACA had three core aims to highlight and discuss with MPs:

1. More funding to deal with the increased cost of food prices and of staff, the current situation is unsustainable, many caterers, particularly smaller and medium sized companies will find it difficult to continue operating, threatening thousands of jobs. LACA are calling for a minimum free school meal value in England of £3.00 per meal (index linked).
2. An extension of free school meals for all children whose parents are entitled to Universal Credit
3. For funding for school meals to be ringfenced to ensure funding follows the child. The budget is currently issued to schools who do not always pass the full amount to the caterer to provide school meals.



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# Competitions

## LACA School Chef of the Year



## LACA Finishing Touches



PROMOTING  
CULINARY TALENT  
2023



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# Apprenticeships

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**Production Chef Apprenticeship**  
A professional standard for a catering/kitchen assistant



A catering/kitchen assistant works as part of the kitchen team to help prepare food for school lunches, school dinners and other catering services. Duties may include setting up the kitchen, preparing food, cooking, cleaning, and maintaining the kitchen. They also ensure that the kitchen is safe and hygienic, and that all food is served to a high standard.

**Entry**  
Employers will set their own entry requirements in order to start on this apprenticeship.

**Duration**  
Typically this apprenticeship will take 12 months.

**Level**  
This apprenticeship standard is set at level 2.

**Progression**  
Progression from this apprenticeship is expected to be onto a senior production chef role.

**Functional Skills**  
To complete the apprenticeship the employee must pass level 1 English and maths (or have the appropriate exemption certificate) level 2 before undertaking their end point assessment.

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**Senior Production Chef Apprenticeship**



Senior production chefs may lead a catering team or may support the head chef in larger establishments, or appropriate site manager. They supervise teams in a variety of kitchen environments, for example: care homes and high street casual dining or pub kitchens. Senior chefs may include head chef, second or cook. Senior production chefs have accountability for the day-to-day running of the kitchen and maintaining consistent food and quality across all areas and during all stages of production and supply.

**Entry**  
Employers will set their own entry requirements in order to start on this apprenticeship.

**Duration**  
Typically this apprenticeship will take 12 months.

**Level**  
This apprenticeship standard is set at level 3.

**Progression**  
Chefs will gain experience in an operational role. Typically without supervisory responsibilities before individuals that successfully achieve production cooking will be ready to progress onto a higher level position, apprenticeship or further training.

**Functional Skills**  
If the employee does not have maths and English GCSE passes at grade C or above, they will need to pass maths and English Functional Skills level 2 during their Apprenticeship.

**End Assessment**  
To achieve this apprenticeship standard, the apprentice will agree with the apprentice learning provider and assessment partner to undertake a competent independent assessment.

**HIT Professional Trainers**  
Alongside the apprentice learning and development plan, setting a timetable of learning activities in preparation for the End Point Assessment (EPA). The HIT Vocational Trainer will meet with the apprentice regularly either online or face to face to complete and review assessments, provide further coaching where required and agree the next steps of learning.

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**Hospitality Manager Apprenticeship**



Hospitality managers work across a huge variety of organisations including bars, restaurants, clubs, conference centres, banqueting venues, hotels and contract caterers. These managers generally specialise in a particular area, however their core knowledge, skills and behaviours are aligned. Common to all managers in the hospitality sector is their passion for exceeding customers' expectations.

**Entry**  
Employers will set their own entry requirements in order to start on this apprenticeship.

**Duration**  
Typically this apprenticeship will take 18 months.

**Level**  
This apprenticeship standard is set at level 4.

**Functional Skills**  
If the employee does not have maths and English GCSE passes at grade C or above, they will need to pass maths and English Functional Skills level 2 during their Apprenticeship.

**End Assessment**  
To achieve this apprenticeship standard, the employer, learning provider and assessment partner will agree with the apprentice to undertake a competent independent end point assessment.

**HIT Professional Trainers**  
Alongside the apprentice learning and development plan, setting a timetable of learning activities in preparation for the End Point Assessment (EPA). The HIT Vocational Trainer will meet with the apprentice regularly either online or face to face to complete and review assessments, provide further coaching where required and agree the next steps of learning.

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**Operations/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship**



An operations/departmental manager is responsible for managing goals and objectives, and achieving delivery of the organisation's strategy. They are accountable to a more senior manager or the business owner, working in all sizes of organisations, with specific responsibilities and job roles that will vary but the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed will be the same.

**Entry**  
Employers will set their own entry requirements in order to start on this apprenticeship.

**Duration**  
Typically this apprenticeship will take 18 months.

**Level**  
This apprenticeship standard is set at level 5.

**Functional Skills**  
If the employee does not have maths and English GCSE passes at grade C or above, they will need to pass maths and English Functional Skills level 2 during their Apprenticeship.

**End Assessment**  
To achieve this apprenticeship standard, the employer, learning provider and assessment partner will agree with the apprentice to undertake a competent independent end point assessment.

**HIT Professional Trainers**  
Alongside the apprentice learning and development plan, setting a timetable of learning activities in preparation for the End Point Assessment (EPA). The HIT Vocational Trainer will meet with the apprentice regularly either online or face to face to complete and review assessments, provide further coaching where required and agree the next steps of learning.

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# SCHOOL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

# Professional Standards



## A professional standard for a general kitchen/catering assistant

A general kitchen/catering assistant works as part of the kitchen team to help ensure the effective and efficient preparation of lunch in a school dining area. Duties may be varied and include setting up the dining area, basic food preparation and cooking, regeneration of cook-chill items, service of ready-to-eat meal deliveries, cash handling, customer service, cleaning and maintaining equipment and service items. Clean as you go and scheduled resources are vital to a safe operation and a general kitchen/catering assistant needs to make good use of available legal requirements and reduce waste wherever possible. Correct completion of kitchen documentation is important to ensure legal requirements are satisfied. As part of the catering team, assistants must work to the standards contained in the client's / school's food policy to meet healthy eating and wellbeing requirements and provide pupils with a varied and tasty selection of food.

The structure of the standard  
The table in this document contains the professional standard that employers have agreed for the role of a general kitchen/catering assistant in a school catering operation.

The standard is presented in three parts covering:  
PART 1 Knowledge (Know It!)  
PART 2 Skills (Show It!)  
PART 3 Behaviours (Live It!)

Element of the standard	Knowledge (Know It!)	Skills (Show It!)	Behaviours (Live It!)
Food preparation and cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the basic food groups used in school catering environments and their common preparation methods.</li> <li>Starchy foods (bread, rice, potatoes, pasta)</li> <li>Milk and dairy</li> <li>Fruits and vegetables</li> <li>Protein (Meat, fish, eggs and beans)</li> <li>Fat and sugar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform basic food preparation tasks as directed, following kitchen procedures and maintaining food safety and quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create food which tastes good and respects the nutritional guidelines by best use of tools and equipment</li> </ul>
Dining area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know how to store, prepare, regenerate, cook and serve ingredients to meet food safety and quality requirements in own organisation</li> <li>Understand how to store and use ingredients and resources efficiently and the importance of recording waste</li> <li>Know how to set up the dining area, including tables, chairs and service equipment safely and efficiently</li> <li>Know how to clear and close down the dining area and store of equipment such as tables, chairs and serving equipment</li> <li>Know when food should be served and how it should be served</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Store, prepare, regenerate, cook and serve ingredients correctly to produce good quality safe food within the organisation's style and operational style</li> <li>Follow procedures regarding usage and waste of resources</li> <li>Work with the midday supervisor to set up the dining area in line with requirements</li> <li>Clear and close down the dining area and store equipment in line with organisational requirements</li> <li>Ensure food is ready at the right time and available for service</li> <li>Serve food and drink listening carefully to pupils and responding to their needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work safely effectively and efficiently</li> <li>Set an example to others by working in ways which minimise waste</li> <li>Work with the midday supervisor to ensure the most appropriate and efficient set up and clearing of the dining area</li> <li>Take pride when presenting food for service and consider how it looks through the eyes of a child to ensure it is attractive and appealing</li> <li>Make pupils and staff feel welcome, developing a rapport during food and drink service</li> </ul>
Customers and service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the common requirements and requests in a school catering operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond positively to requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take pride in own role through an enthusiastic and professional approach to tasks, welcome feedback and use it to plan ways of improving</li> <li>Respond positively to instruction and work to assist team members to respect other people's point of view, working environment and equal plan to embrace the school food approach to food</li> <li>Take a proactive approach to going beyond ensuring effective on services to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils</li> </ul>

Element of the standard	Knowledge (Know It!)	Skills (Show It!)	Behaviours (Live It!)
Nutrition, allergens and dietary needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know what makes up a healthy balanced meal in line with the food based standards and guidance, and how to ensure these are met and why this is important to pupils</li> <li>Know common food allergens and the organisation's procedures for service of them, and the key legislation governing allergens</li> <li>Know common dietary requirements and how food is prepared to meet these</li> <li>Know the food safety practices and procedures to ensure the safe preparation, cooking, holding and service of food in line with legal requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow instruction when preparing, regenerating and serving food to keep the nutritional goodness (e.g. by not adding salt, using healthier cooking methods)</li> <li>Identify allergens in preparation and cooking of food, ensure it is prepared, cooked and stored in line with legal and organisational procedures</li> <li>Ensure dietary requirements are met when preparing, cooking, regenerating and serving food</li> <li>Prepare, cook and present food to agreed food safety practices and guidelines, ensuring a clean and hygienic kitchen environment is maintained at all times and food safety procedures are followed and recorded</li> <li>Ensure ingredients are stored, prepared, cooked and presented to deliver a quality product that is safe for the consumer</li> <li>Check work areas in line with organisational procedures, work safely and ensure all records, e.g. cleaning schedules, temperature checks, are completed accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for ways to make food pupils to experiment with familiar and new foods</li> <li>Take responsibility for allergens and dietary requirements in the school catering operation</li> <li>Put safety at the forefront of all work tasks, embrace a clean-as-you-go approach, be proactive when identifying potential hazards, maintaining records and reporting in a timely manner</li> </ul>
Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know what to look for in ingredients and how to handle and store them to maintain quality, in line with food legislation</li> <li>Know how to complete scheduled cleaning and check, correct storage, complete cleaning schedule report defects and take action</li> <li>Regularly check work area to make sure it is safe, report hazards, rectify safe systems of working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with different people for the situation, and take ownership and development of own skills</li> <li>Work with team members to ensure that all tasks are completed to the required standards</li> <li>Respond positively to instruction and work to assist team members to respect other people's point of view, working environment and equal plan to embrace the school food approach to food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take pride in own role through an enthusiastic and professional approach to tasks, welcome feedback and use it to plan ways of improving</li> <li>Respond positively to instruction and work to assist team members to respect other people's point of view, working environment and equal plan to embrace the school food approach to food</li> <li>Take a proactive approach to going beyond ensuring effective on services to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils</li> </ul>

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## Membership Services Free to members



### School Workforce Development

School catering workforce development guidance on how to use the professional standards

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**ALLERGEN GUIDANCE**

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO EAT SAFELY AT SCHOOL

### LACA Allergens Guidance and Risk Analysis Process

LACA have developed guidance for managing allergen requirements, including a process for analysing individual pupils.



**MEALANALYSER**

### Meal Analyser

LACA have teamed up with the University of Edinburgh Business School, LM3 and ASSIST FM to produce a carbon calculator (Meal Analyser) specifically aimed at the school food sector.

# Membership Services Free to members

## LACA Guidance: School Breakfast Provision

**LACA** Guidance Document –  
the school food people **School Breakfast Provision**

As school food providers, there is increasing pressure on us to be able to provide a breakfast for our school population. **It is widely recognised that breakfast is an important meal for children to have each day, to prepare them for their day of learning at school.**

**The LACA view is that a breakfast should complement the existing lunchtime meal service and that it is not a choice of one or the other.**

Research has shown that consumption of a healthy fulfilling breakfast improves behaviour and concentration in the classroom resulting in higher academic outcomes. However, in contrast, studies have also found that 1 in 7 children come into school without having breakfast, which is a concern.

The key benefits and objectives of an effective breakfast/lunch service are:

- Improving children's attendance, motivation and reducing lateness
- Improving social inclusion
- Increasing an important opportunity to promote healthy eating
- Providing an important opportunity to ensure children receive a hot, nutritious and balanced meal
- Improving behaviour and concentration levels in classrooms
- Improving social skills, such as table manners, communication and interaction

To support school catering providers, LACA has developed this guidance document for members to assist in setting up and managing a successful breakfast service.

The guidance is not designed to cover all the various requirements that come from our pupils especially those that may fall in to SEND for example, so all schools and catering operations will need to carry out their own specific risk assessments to ensure their needs are met through this provision.

In order to present this information in a logical and structured manner three specific categories have been identified. These are:

- Infrastructure
- The menu offer/food
- Resources (labour and equipment)

www.LACA.co.uk

VERSION 1 | 18.03.24

**LACA** Infrastructure  
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It is recognised there are numerous ways of delivering breakfasts in schools, either by the in-house catering operator, through a third-party provider (e.g. Magic Breakfast) or through volunteers using donated foods from supermarkets to name a few.

School children are a vulnerable group and we need to ensure the food service is maintained to the highest food safety standards at all times. As such, the following points must be considered:

- The service provider needs to manage the allergen requirement in the same way as lunch. This is even more important if the service is provided by a third party where further consideration and an auditable trail needs to be demonstrated for allergen management.
- The foods, if not provided by the catering operator, on site need to be stored and prepared separately to avoid cross contamination and comply with Food Safety legislation and the local Environmental Health Officers inspections.
- Safeguarding of the children is paramount, so any catering staff need to have enhanced Children's DBS certification.
- It is standard practice that the direct supervision of the children during the breakfast service will be the direct responsibility of the school.
- Earlier access to and setting up the dining facility, cleaning down afterwards and putting dining furniture away.
- Early access to the kitchen facility, increased security.
- If the breakfast service is provided by a third party / volunteers and access is agreed as required to the kitchen facility then appropriate, documented training for use and cleaning of equipment will be required.
- If the breakfast service is provided by a third party / volunteers then clear agreements will need to be in place regarding cleanliness and the time when the kitchen will be handed back to the school caterer to ensure school lunch is not impacted.

Guidance 1: School Breakfast Provision

www.LACA.co.uk

VERSION 1 | 18.03.24

**LACA** The Menu Offer/Food  
the school food people

When planning a nutritious breakfast menu, there are several factors to take into account. These include:

**1. Dietary Requirements:**

- Include a variety of foods from major food groups:
- Fruit and vegetables – potentially including no added sugar
- Dairy – suggested items to be included would be milk, yoghurt and soft cheese
- Carbohydrate – this could include a no added sugar cereal (Cornflakes) slice of toast, bagel or crumpet with a low-fat spread

Cereals are a valuable breakfast item that provide energy, fibre, and however many cereals aimed at children contain very high levels of sugar which can contribute to tooth decay, obesity and type 2 diabetes. Therefore, it is recommended that these types of cereals should be replaced with wholegrain cereals with the option to add fruit to increase natural sweetness.

One item should be taken from each of the above food groups to ensure a balanced diet is maintained and should be planned in conjunction with the lunch menu, referring to the SFS (Jink) School Food Standards and other food provided at school other than lunch.

**2. Ingredient Variety:**

Mix up ingredients by using an assortment of colours, shapes, sizes and textures.

It is important that nominated suppliers are used to supply breakfast ingredients as they have gone through the necessary vetting and approval procedures and will maintain due diligence and robust food safety.

Further consideration should be given to the existing "School Fruit and Vegetables scheme (SFVS)", and "free and subsidised milk scheme" that the benefits from these programmes are maximised.

Based on the suggestions above a typical menu could be:

Cornflakes served with semi skimmed milk, banana  
Low fat yogurt, fruit, jam, crumpet

The average food cost per pupil/portion based on the suggestions above average 0.52p -0.60p per meal (this excludes any labour or other costs taken from Spring 2024 period).

Guidance 2: School Breakfast Provision

www.LACA.co.uk

VERSION 1 | 18.03.24

**LACA** Resources  
the school food people

Thought and budget allocation needs to be made for all set up costs, such as:

- Toaster (4 slice) commercial model
- Plates, bowls knives, spoons, beakers (especially if your school uses airline trays at lunchtime)
- Separate storage for the food items (fridge/freezer capacity)

As well as additional equipment the new breakfast service will require additional staff/labour requirements potentially hours and pairs of hands to ensure an efficient service.

**A typical staffing formula may look like this:**

FOOD PREPARATION	46 - 100 pupils	= 2 members of staff for 2 hours a day
NS: the suggested roles and hours are a guide only and will vary much depend on the kitchen/dining set up, menu provided and excludes pupil supervision.	101 - 175 pupils	= 3 members of staff for 2 hours per day
	176 - 250 pupils	= 4 members of staff for 2 hours per day

It is important to remember that any member of staff who is engaged with the preparation and/or service of breakfasts should have a minimum level 2 Food Safety training.

They should also be trained in allergen management to ensure compliance with appropriate legislation.

Guidance 3: School Breakfast Provision

www.LACA.co.uk

VERSION 1 | 18.03.24

# LACA

*the school food people*

## Membership Services Discounted for members



### Safeguarding your Catering Service

LACA, the school food people, has partnered with environmental health consultancy LBA Safety to provide members with a virtual food safety management system.



### LACA Menu Checking Service

Use the service and include the LACA Menu Checked logo to assure your customers the food you serve is legally compliant



### LACA Buying Group

Our framework agreements to offer value for money and all our framework agreements are EU-compliant and member-led.



### E-Learning Courses

LACA have secured a number of elearning courses through Highfield Learning at a reduced rate for LACA members.





*the school food people*

# Membership Services

## Networking and Learning

### Regional Activities

LACA is organised around a regional structure.

Meetings both social and learning based together with market expos provide regional activities where local arrangements support access to events. There are opportunities to join regional committees and contribute to the organisation.



### National Activities

LACA continues to organise a schedule of events and webinars throughout the year, providing attendees with valuable opportunities to maintain industry knowledge and access the latest product development.

The annual Main Event offers the largest industry specific exhibition, with key note speakers representing Government and industry. A spectacular awards evening celebrates industry success and Finishing Touches highlights the amazing craft skills in the sector. NSMW features serving school lunch in the House of Commons, highlighting the service to MPs. The annual School Chef of the Year competition is a particular highlight.

The Chair's regular e newsletter will keep you up to date with current issues and this is supported by regular 'School Caterer' magazine.

***“The full advantages of membership stretch across the whole year”***



*the school food people*

# Diary dates

## **D Day Celebrations**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## **Main Event & School Food Show 2024**

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024  
Birmingham Hilton Metropole

## **National School Meals Week 2024**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024



*the school food people*

**Thank you for your  
time, any questions?**

Anita Brown

LACA National Chair

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