



Guidelines for producers and users of school education resources about food

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1.0 Introduction

In 1996, the UK government, through the Nutrition Task Force, published *Guidelines on Educational Materials concerned with Nutrition*, as part of *The Health of the Nation*. At this time, the government found that many people were confused by apparently conflicting information and advice about the food they eat. Some educational materials appeared to add to this confusion. Arguably, the same is still true two decades later.

The importance of food education throughout the curriculum in our schools, as part of whole school food approaches and food provision, continues to be part of the solution to ensure that pupils learn how to make healthy food choices now and in the future.

These guidelines build on food and nutrition being integrated into the curriculum^[1,2,3,4], the publication of the UK-wide *Core competences for children and young people*^[5], and the establishment of the skills and knowledge framework. The latter supports teachers to teach food in primary and secondary schools^[6, 7].

This document sets out a series of voluntary guidelines that can be adopted as part of a good practice approach by those who produce and use food education resources for schools. It is hoped that the guidelines will be used to support further food education in schools work, ensuring that children and young people use up-to-date, evidence-based and high-quality resources to support their learning about food.

1.1 The scope and purpose

The guidelines aim to:

- set and promote high standards, expectations and requirements for the production of resources in relation to food education for schools;
- promote consistency of information;
- ensure resources support the curriculum and qualifications (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and/or Wales), as well as the *Core competences for children and young people*;
- promote best practice, supporting teachers and enabling children and young people to learn.

The guidelines cover all types of educational resources, such as (but not limited to) worksheets, posters, leaflets, teaching packs, teacher guides, exam text books, videos, presentations, webinars, recipes, board games and cards, interactive games and activities, online learning, and whiteboard activities. The guidelines are not intended to be applied to academic materials, such as university text books.

1.2 Who are they for?

The guidelines have been developed for a variety of audiences, but specifically for those who develop and use resources. Audiences include:

- commercial education resource publishers;
- non-profit organisations, charities and other groups that develop resources;
- industry, including school caterers, that develop resources;
- governmental bodies, including local authorities and *Healthy Schools*;

- teachers, including those working in nurseries, special schools, academy trusts and PRUs;
- teacher training providers;
- health professionals;
- parents/carers;
- others who might identify in working in this area, e.g. extra-curricular activities.

1.3 How can they be used?

It is anticipated that the guidelines can be used in a variety of ways.

GENERALLY	RESOURCE DEVELOPERS	RESOURCE USERS
 <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the communication of consistent and accurate information related to food; • ensure all information provided is reliable, balanced and evidence based and from reputable sources; • avoid the publication of misleading information; • support making high quality resources for schools. 	 <p>To help publishers, agencies, charities, teachers and others who create food education materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop high quality resources; • plan and write new resources; • update existing resources. 	 <p>To help schools, teachers, trainee teachers and other resource users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audit current or new resources to ensure they are accurate, up to date and appropriate; • plan learning intent; • plan implementation and delivery in the curriculum; • evaluate and assess learning impact.

This document includes checklists that could be used for planning and resource production purposes, as well as auditing: one for resource developers and one for resource users.

2.0 The guidelines

There are 14 guidelines, grouped into two areas: content and general.

2.1 Content guidelines

The specific guidelines covered will depend on the nature of the resource being developed or reviewed. These content guidelines are based on an audit of the common food themes found in the curricula around the UK ^[1,2,3,4], as well as the government's *Core competences for children and young people* ^[5]. The latter document sets out core skills and knowledge for different age groups from 5 to 16 years, providing a useful benchmark.

1. Healthy eating and nutrition

- Resources should be based on the UK's healthy eating guide (The Eatwell Guide ^[8]) and in line with school food standards (where appropriate).
- Messages should be in line with current government healthy eating guidelines, promoting a varied and healthy diet. These include at least 5 A DAY; reducing salt, free sugars and saturated fat; increasing fibre and having 2 portions of fish per week (1 of which should be oily). If hydration is mentioned, the recommendation is 6 - 8 drinks per day.
- Over time, concepts of energy (including energy balance), nutrients, fibre, water, dietary needs and special diets are covered.
- Resources should take account of current government health policy, reflecting recent overviews of scientific thinking, as put forward by governmental advisory bodies, such as the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition ^[9]. Resources should acknowledge the main sources on which they are based.

2. Food provenance

- Food is produced, processed and sold in different ways, such as conventional and organic farming

methods, and fair trade. Resources should reflect current UK farming and food production processes. They should recognise that a range of views exists about how food is produced and present a balance of views. If global food production and/or processing are highlighted, the location should be clearly stated.

- Resources should recognise there are a number of different stages involved in food production and processing – the goal of which is to make food that is safe to consume.
- There are a range of different quality assurance standards and/or marks in operation. Resources should, where possible, make reference to the relevant standards for food production, e.g. Red Tractor, LEAF Marque, Quality Standard beef/lamb, Lion Mark, Northern Ireland Beef & Lamb Farm Quality Assurance, RSPCA Assured, EU Protected Food Names, Marine Stewardship Council, Ecolabel, Soil Association Organic Standard, FairTrade.
- Resources should reference that there are a range of views and opinions when it comes to defining food supply sustainability, though most definitions cover the following factors: sustainable farming practices, low environmental impact, upholding animal welfare, protection of public health, good employment practices, nutrition and community support.

3. Food preparation

- Activities should promote the acquisition of food preparation skills, as well as the safe use of a range of equipment (with due regard to hygiene). Resources should encourage an awareness and understanding of safe practices in order to prevent accidents and harm to those preparing food, e.g. safe use of electrical equipment or sharp knives.

- The intention should be for resources to enable pupils to acquire skills and knowledge to competently plan and safely prepare dishes for a healthy and varied diet.
- Activities should be age/ability appropriate, based on the government's *Core competences for children and young people* [5].
- Recipes and dishes should reflect current healthy eating advice, featuring predominately savoury dishes and take account of concerns about portion sizes. Recipes and dishes should reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the UK, and be mindful of different dietary needs, e.g. allergies.
- Cooking sessions should take account of the cost of ingredients for recipes, as pupils may be asked to bring ingredients from home.
- Where appropriate, resources should enable pupils to adapt recipes and dishes to make them healthier and more appealing.
- Good food hygiene and safety should be paramount. Resources should help pupils plan and carry out food storage, preparation and cooking, safely and hygienically. Where appropriate, steps to reduce the risk of food poisoning should be highlighted, e.g. thoroughly wash and dry hands after touching raw meat, and food hygiene regulations referenced (taking into account UK differences). This would include food traceability, temperatures for cold and hot food storage, core cooking temperatures and use of leftovers.
- Recipes should include the title, ingredients (listed in order of use and in metric quantities), equipment and method. Other support information may be provided, such as hygiene, risk assessment, skills, modifications to the recipe and storage. A photograph of the dish, and/or preparation stages, may also be beneficial.
- Where activities relate to food science, key scientific principles should be stated. For example, these may include composition (structures/colloidal systems), effects of heat (heat transfer), involvement of enzymes and acids, spoilage and safety, preservation of food and sensory evaluation.
- Food waste should be actively emphasised and minimised and food leftovers used. The composting of fruit and vegetables and recycling of food packaging should be promoted. Reusable containers should be encouraged, with minimal or no use of unrecyclable materials.

4. Food choice

- Information and activities on the topic of factors affecting food choice should acknowledge that people eat or avoid certain foods according to a range of factors, such as religion, culture, ethical belief, cost, personal preference, health, eating occasion, the influence of role models, body image, mood, social connectedness, food skills and knowledge, and where they live.
- When encouraging healthier eating, aspects of behavioural science should be taken into consideration, including availability of food, attractiveness, social norms and role models.
- The influence of food marketing, advertising and promotion on purchasing behaviour, food selection and dietary patterns should be highlighted where resources deal with food choice factors.
- When dealing with portion sizes of food and drinks, or where the resource suggests a typical portion size, consideration should be taken of the age of the pupils. Portions for children in nursery and primary schools should be smaller than suggested for an adult.
- Resources featuring food labelling should adhere to the European Food Information to Consumers (FIC) regulation. Nutrition and allergen labelling should be based on the guidance from the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSC) and Food Standards Agency (FSA). Reference could also be made to the UK's front-of-pack traffic light labelling. Resources should encourage pupils to read and use food labels to make informed decisions, e.g. selecting a lower salt or sugar option.

5. Healthy lifestyles

Resources should:

- promote and emphasise healthy lifestyles, such as having a varied and balanced diet (food and drinks), being active and brushing teeth twice a day, including how healthy lifestyles contribute to disease prevention, physical, social and mental wellbeing, and a healthy weight;
- reflect the UK guidelines on physical activity for children, i.e. 60 minutes per day. A range of activities should be promoted, and stereotypes challenged, e.g. only boys playing football;
- be placed within the context that being active every day should be the norm, and that sedentary behaviour (inactivity) should be decreased, e.g. watching TV, playing computer games.

2.2 General guidelines

6. Curriculum and qualifications

- Resources should link to and support the curriculum (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and/or Wales, as appropriate) and/or qualification specifications. The *Core competences for children and young people* may also be used as a guide.
- Learning can be framed through a number of perspectives, including:
 - dedicated food or personal health lessons;
 - science and physical education;
 - literacy and maths;
 - cross-curricular learning, such as STEM, geography, history, religious education and art;
 - assemblies and event days;
 - extra-curricular activities and off-site visits.
- Clear references and links should be given, helping the teacher to make a judgement about the appropriateness of the resource to support their teaching.
- If resources are aimed at out-of-school learning, the rationale and learning outcomes should be stated.

7. Support teaching and learning

- Resources should introduce, develop and/or enhance the food skills and knowledge of children and young people. For example, enabling them to better comprehend the complexity of food issues in modern life, appreciate food production and processing issues in the UK and how these are regulated, how to apply healthy eating principles to make healthy food choices, and to acquire practical skills to prepare a range of dishes.

- Resources should promote best practice with regard to showcasing Schemes of Work, lesson plans, aim and objective setting, differentiation, progression, and teaching and learning styles, e.g. active learning strategies, show and tell, practical work, group work, and assessment.
- Learning intent and objectives for learning should be clearly stated.
- Links may be made to guidance for teachers delivering food teaching in schools, such as the Food teaching in primary/secondary schools: knowledge and skills framework^[6,7].
- Where appropriate, resources may highlight career opportunities with regard to food and other areas.

8. Evidence based

- Education resources should not be misleading. Sufficient detail and explanation should be included to ensure that the information being given is placed in the relevant context and is not open to misinterpretation.
- Where appropriate, resources could showcase real-life situations and practices. These should reflect the most up-to-date working practices (and should state where the example is located, e.g. UK, Europe).
- Where a range of different views exist, and there is no recent scientific overview or consensus, materials should acknowledge the controversy. If producers of resources put greater emphasis on one specific point of view, they should state that this is their own particular point of view. Where possible, a balance of views should be presented.
- Where appropriate, references should be provided to allow the user to clearly understand the source from which the resource has been developed and to look at the references to gain deeper insight.

9. Campaigning, fundraising and marketing

- If resources are developed for schools as part of a campaign, fundraising or marketing activity, a clear educational rationale and benefit must be stated.
- The name of the resource producer must be clearly stated, including if the resource has been sponsored by a third party. This will allow teachers to decide whether they wish to use the resource.
- Logos and brand names in the text and illustrations should be used both sparingly and in a relevant context, e.g. as a case study of food production, careers information, recipe reformulation. Where reference is made in text and illustrations to a specific product or service, it is preferable to use generic grouping or images. There may be situations where the mention of branded products from sponsors can be justified in helping users identify particular types of products. Where this is done, such use should be sparingly and in a relevant context.

10. Original works and adaptations

- If someone other than the author adapts an existing resource, permission must be sought and the original source must be referenced. If the author sells an adapted resource, permission must be sought regarding copyright and potential income sharing. Steps must be taken so that works are not plagiarised.
- Where teacher-created resources are sold via resource portals, websites and/or social media, they should be their own work and not contain content from others, unless permission has been granted.

11. Design and production

- Resources must be appropriate for their intended users in terms of layout, content, level of knowledge and understanding required, language used and complexity of ideas put forward, i.e. know the audience.
- Resources may be produced in editable formats, allowing users to adapt these for different learning needs.

- The resource should demonstrate excellence in the use of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Any abbreviations or acronyms should be explained in full the first time they are used (and ideally avoided).
- Where it is helpful to users, page numberings, an index, links to further information, a glossary of terms and/or brief summaries of key points should be included.
- Further reading or website lists could be provided.
- All resources should carry a publication date.

12. Consultation, testing and feedback

- Resources should be developed in consultation with end-users. For example, this may be teachers, initial teacher trainers and/or pupils. In addition, a time frame for comments should be provided, e.g. 3 - 4 weeks.
- Where appropriate, resources should be tested with their target user to evaluate effectiveness before publication.
- Once published, if feedback is received, it should be acknowledged. If resources need updating in light of feedback, amendments should be made as quickly as possible (depending on format type). A version number and date should be added.

13. Society, culture and religion

- Resources should be mindful to the needs of all groups in society and be inclusive. They should always:
 - recognise and project the broad range of activities open to different genders, and avoid stereotyping;
 - reflect the multicultural nature and religious diversity of society in the UK;
 - recognise people with different needs;
 - take account of different family types;
 - take account of different age groups;
 - contain no explicit or implied prejudice to any groups in our society.

- Resource producers should recognise the complexity of the social and cultural factors and religious traditions attached to food. They should:
 - use vocabulary that avoids implicit or explicit value judgements about particular food or lifestyles;
 - avoid the use of communication techniques and terminology that is likely to be scaremongering.

14. Contact details

- The name of the producer, and the name of any sponsor/funder, should be clearly stated for transparency.
- Contact details should be provided, e.g. web address, email address, telephone number, postal address, social media.

3.0 Checklists

3.1 Resource producers

CONTENT

	GUIDELINES	COVERED?	ACTION
1	Healthy eating and nutrition <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on UK healthy eating model.• Reflect current government healthy eating guidelines.		
2	Food provenance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UK farming practices reflected (unless about another part of the world).		
3	Food preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enable food skill acquisition.• Recipes reflect healthy eating advice and cost is considered.• Good food hygiene and safety.		
4	Food choice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Range of factors highlighted.• Current food labels used.		
5	Healthy lifestyles <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on UK guidelines for activity.• Promote and emphasise healthy lifestyles.		

GENERAL

	GUIDELINES	COVERED?	ACTION
6	<p>Curriculum and qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and qualification linked. Links to other subjects stated. 		
7	<p>Support teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning objectives stated. Progression and differentiation acknowledged. 		
8	<p>Evidence based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not misleading and references given for further reading. Acknowledgement given to areas of controversy or where greater emphasis is on one specific point of view. 		
9	<p>Campaigning, fundraising and marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear educational rationale and benefit stated. Logos and brand names used sparingly and in context. 		
10	<p>Original works and adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permission sought on use of copyright materials. Work is not plagiarised. 		
11	<p>Design and production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. Helpful layout for user in mind. 		
12	<p>Consultation, testing and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation and feedback from end users. 		
13	<p>Society, culture and religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect modern UK society. 		
14	<p>Contact details</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details added, including date of publication (and version number, where appropriate). 		

3.2 Resource users

CONTENT

	GUIDELINES	COVERED?	ACTION
1	Healthy eating and nutrition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on UK healthy eating model. • Reflect current government healthy eating guidelines. 		
2	Food provenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK farming practices reflected (unless about another part of the world). 		
3	Food preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable food skill acquisition. • Recipes reflect healthy eating advice and cost is considered. • Good food hygiene and safety. 		
4	Food choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of factors highlighted. • Current food labels used. 		
5	Healthy lifestyles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on UK guidelines for activity. • Promote and emphasise healthy lifestyles. 		

GENERAL

	GUIDELINES	COVERED?	ACTION
6	Curriculum and qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and qualification links provided. Links to other subjects stated. 		
7	Support teaching and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of Work or lesson plans provided. Learning objectives stated. Progression and differentiation highlighted. 		
8	Evidence based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not misleading and references given. Acknowledgement given to areas of controversy or where greater emphasis is on one specific point of view. 		
9	Campaigning, fundraising and marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear educational rationale and benefit stated. Logos and brand names used sparingly and in context. 		
10	Original works and adaptations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permission sought on use of copyright materials. Work is not plagiarised. 		
11	Design and production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helpful layout for pupils. Accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. 		
12	Consultation, testing and feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact details provided to give feedback. 		
13	Society, culture and religion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect modern UK society. 		
14	Contact details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details added, including date of publication (and version number, where appropriate). 		

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The Guidelines received 57 individual comments from a range of individuals and organisations as part of an open consultation (February - March 2019).

References

- [1] National Curriculum for England
- [2] Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
- [3] Curriculum for Excellence
- [4] National Curriculum (Wales)
- [5] Core competences for children and young people aged 5 to 16 years
- [6] Food teaching in primary schools: knowledge and skills framework
- [7] Food teaching in secondary schools: knowledge and skills framework
- [8] The Eatwell Guide
- [9] Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)



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