

FIRST COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF FOOD EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS FINDS HUGE DISPARITY IN STANDARDS

Today, the AKO Foundation together with the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation reveal the results of the first comprehensive review of food education in English schools.

Jamie Oliver believes that food education is absolutely vital in the fight against diet-related disease and integral to young people leading healthy and happy lives. Jamie successfully campaigned for food education to be part of the national curriculum in 2013 but, since the launch of the government's School Food Plan, there has been little effective evaluation into how well food education is being taught, how it is being delivered and the impact it is having.

The AKO Foundation commissioned the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation and expert partners (including the British Nutrition Foundation, Food Teachers Centre and the University of Sheffield) to undertake a comprehensive review of the state of food education and food culture in primary and secondary schools in England. School leaders, parents, pupils, catering organisations, NGOs, governors and more took part in surveys and focus groups, reviewing three key areas:

1. The curriculum.
2. The whole school approach.
3. Behaviour change.

In summary, the findings showed:

- A stark difference between schools doing a great job at delivering strong food education and others struggling with a lack of time, resource and support.
- Alarming concerns about the unhealthy food environment at secondary schools, compromising pupils' ability to make good food choices.
- A strong and clear teacher, pupil and parent voice asking for a healthier school environment.

To address the findings, the report makes four key recommendations to ensure young people are receiving the education and start in life that they deserve:

- Schools should be healthy food zones.
- More support should be given to the school workforce.
- Improvements in food education qualifications and resources are needed.
- Stronger reporting and evaluation needs to be in place.

For more information on the findings and to read the full review, please access the report and appendices here:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B6vmekGX5OPfTm9xMzc5VkpCUTg>

Jamie Oliver said:

“This major report has studied all the data. We’ve spoken to everyone, from headteachers, to food teachers, parents, school governors, and kids themselves. And we’ve proven the simple point that we need to help kids apply food knowledge in the real world, and we need to support our dedicated food teachers. We must stop giving our kids contradictory messages. Most of all, if we want healthy children, we need to make all schools healthy zones. Full stop.”

The AKO Foundation said:

“As a charitable foundation focused on improving educational outcomes, we wholeheartedly believe in the importance of ensuring pupils are supported in being healthy. This report clearly shows the steps that can now be taken to protect our children and ensure they have the best chance to succeed.”

Dr Caroline Hart from the University of Sheffield said:

“For many primary schools, a major concern is the prolific sale of cakes, sweets, cookies and crisps as part of fundraising efforts. In many secondary schools, a key issue is the lack of healthy food offers that enable pupils to put their food education into practice. Pupils told us that, when sugary drinks, super-sized cookies and ‘chip only’ options are available, it made it hard for them to select healthier alternatives. The vast majority of parents responding to our survey supported the reduction of unhealthy food offers in school.”

For further information, please contact:

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Note to Editors:

The Food Education Learning Landscape Review was conducted from November 2016 through to September 2017. The Jamie Oliver Foundation, in partnership with the British Nutrition Foundation, the Food Teachers Centre and the University of Sheffield, worked with over 50 expert organisations to gather evidence and opinion. A number of separate reports were commissioned for the review. The full methodology, findings and recommendations are within the review document.