

Curriculum Toolkit for Teachers and Learners in Wales

Health Promoting Behaviour: **Focus on Food and Nutrition**

Introduction

Welcome to the food and nutrition toolkit. This toolkit has been co-constructed with teachers for use with both primary and secondary learners. It should be used flexibly to meet the identified needs of your learners within the context of your school.

This toolkit focuses on food and nutrition as a key theme within the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience. Teaching and learning about food and nutrition should link to all of the statements of what matters within the Health and Well-being AoLE, where possible. In particular, **Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits** and **Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others**.

This will support learners to develop their skills in critical thinking, decision-making and risk assessment when it comes to food and nutrition and will empower them to better navigate the food environment and make informed, healthier choices that promote their growth and development.

You should consider...

- Whether the content of these resources are developmentally appropriate for your learners
- The appropriateness of the content of the resources and its relevance to *your* learners in *your* context
- How this resource may support prior learning for food and nutrition

How this Toolkit is organised

Teacher guidance is designed to support classroom teachers plan and prepare lessons on the topic of food and nutrition.

It includes:

- Curriculum for Wales links
- Why this learning is needed
- Important key messages
- Overviews of the knowledge banks and classroom activities
- Sources of further information to support teaching and learning.

Teachers should make themselves familiar with this guidance prior to planning for delivery.

Teacher Knowledge Banks are a professional learning tool which provide teachers with the key background knowledge and understanding about the topic of food and nutrition linking with the big questions to inform their curriculum design. They include why this topic is important for learners' health and well-being.

Classroom activities are suggestions to support teaching and learning in relation to the health topic. They provide a hook to engage learners in critical thinking, discussion and deepening understanding. They should be used flexibly and can be adapted to meet the identified needs of learners.

Why This Learning Is needed

Children and young people's diets are shaped by the food environments around them, and current evidence shows these environments do not support a healthy balanced diet. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey shows that most children eat too few fruits, vegetables, oily fish and key nutrients such as fibre, while consuming too much fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar. The School Health Research Network (SHRN) Student Health and Wellbeing Survey in Wales highlights fewer than half of primary and secondary learners report eating at least one portion of fruit or vegetables each day.

Good nutrition in early childhood and adolescence plays a crucial role in supporting healthy growth, development and wellbeing, both now and in the future. The food and drink children consume helps lay the foundations for a healthy, happy life.

Today's children and young people grow up in a complex food environment where many factors shape what they eat. Highly persuasive marketing, options available in shops, the placement of products at checkouts, portion sizes, pricing, promotions, and even what peers and family members choose all influence children's decisions. Bright packaging, celebrity endorsements and influencer content add to these pressures, making it harder for young people to navigate options confidently and independently.

By helping children understand their food environment, teachers can support them to think critically, recognise persuasive techniques and make more informed decisions.

Long-term research shows a strong link between childhood obesity and obesity in adulthood. This highlights the importance of early education and prevention.

By helping children and young people understand food and health and become more informed about the wider food environment from a young age, schools can empower them to navigate options confidently.

This helps reduce the long-term impact of poor diet and contributes to lowering rates of food-related ill health across the lifespan.

Key messages for food and nutrition

Food and water are essential for life.

We need different types and amounts of food to achieve good health and wellbeing. The types and amounts of food changes depending on our age and needs.

Foods are made up of different nutrients, and each nutrient has a specific job in the body to help us to grow, develop and maintain good health.

When we don't get enough of the nutrients we need, or when we consume too much, it can cause health issues.

The food (and drink) we eat affects our health and wellbeing now and over time.

Eating a healthy balanced diet lowers our risk of diseases including obesity, type-2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

Food can be a fun, enjoyable and interesting part of our daily lives and is embedded into our cultures, social interactions and celebrations.

Developing a healthy relationship with food in childhood can lay the foundation for lifelong healthy eating habits.

Some influences, such as cost, availability and food marketing can make it harder to maintain a balanced diet. Understanding how to navigate these influences is an important lifelong skill.

Food skills like planning, shopping, growing and cooking can help us to maintain a healthy balanced diet.

The food we eat can impact the environment. A healthy and environmentally sustainable diet is better for our health and the planet.

Resources are organised in Teacher knowledge banks linked to each 'Big Question'. These questions can, and should, be posed to learners as a vehicle for curriculum delivery.

Big questions	Knowledge bank	Links to statements of what matters
<p>What are the personal impacts of the food we eat?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical and mental health - social interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a healthy balanced diet? • How do food choices affect our physical and mental wellbeing? • Vitamins and minerals 	<p>Health and Well-being Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits – health promoting and health harming behaviours How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being - connections between experiences and emotions Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others – decision-making, assessing risk and critical thinking How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being - social influences, social norms and values</p>
<p>Why do people eat what they eat?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food to survive and thrive - social context - access and availability - culture; personal preferences, taste and beliefs -industry, marketing and advertising - the law and regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people eat what they eat? • How is food an important part of our culture and society? • Industry, Marketing and Advertising • Food labels • The Law and Regulations 	<p>Humanities Human societies are complex and diverse, and shaped by human actions and beliefs – develop an appreciation of belonging Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity, and are able to take considered and ethical action - inequality, choices and decision-making</p>
<p>What are the wider societal impacts of the food we eat?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - health inequalities - where food comes from - environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where food comes from • Environmental Impact Food, Health and Inequality 	<p>Science and Technology The world around us is full of living things which depend on each other for survival -an understanding of the factors which affect our health allows us to make informed decisions about our physical health</p>

Supporting learners toward realisation of the four purposes

Ambitious, capable learners who:	Enterprising, creative contributors who:	Ethical, informed citizens who:	Healthy, confident individuals who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts • can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about • understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts • undertake research and evaluate critically what they find <p>and are ready to learn throughout their lives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect and apply their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products • think creatively to reframe and solve problems • express ideas and emotions through different media <p>and are ready to play a full part in life and work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views • engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values • understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting • are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past • show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet <p>and are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply knowledge about the impact of diet and exercise on physical and mental health in their daily lives • know how to find the information and support to keep safe and well • take measured decisions about life-style and manage risk • have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can <p>and are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.</p>

Knowledge Banks

Knowledge Bank	Title
1	What is a healthy balanced diet? The importance of a healthy diet and the Eatwell Guide
2	Nutrients: Vitamins and minerals Functions and good sources
3	How do Food Choices affect our physical and mental well-being? Healthy eating and mental well-being and the physical benefits
4	Food, culture and society How food is an important part of our culture and society
5	Why do people eat what they eat? The factors that influence our food choices
6	Industry, marketing and advertising The food environment and industry, advertising and marketing tactics
7	Food labels Understanding food labelling, their claims and understanding price labels
8	Food, health and inequality Health inequalities and their effects
9	The Environmental Impact of Our Food Choices Why our food choices matter
10	The law and regulations The importance of laws and regulations relating to food and nutrition
11	Where food comes from Food production including farming, processing and distribution

Classroom activities

Classroom activity	Title
1	<p>News reports and articles</p> <p>Links to reports and articles about food and nutrition with questions for discussion and debate.</p>
2	<p>How are we influenced?</p> <p>Explore the factors that influence decision making when choosing which food and drink to buy.</p>
3	<p>See, think, wonder</p> <p>Images to provoke critical thinking and questioning about food choices.</p>
4	<p>Always, sometimes, never</p> <p>Statements to promote discussion and debate, related to food preparation and food choices.</p>
5	<p>What's in this?</p> <p>Explore considered decision making and promote questioning, relating to ingredients of pre-packed foods.</p>
6	<p>This or that?</p> <p>Explore considered decision making and critical thinking regarding food choices.</p>
7	<p>Recipes</p> <p>Considered decision making and critical thinking relating to food preparation and food choices.</p>
8	<p>Data and statistics</p> <p>Data sources to promote discussion, questioning and critical thinking regarding food and nutrition.</p>

Teacher Resources: Sources of further information to support teaching and learning

- [The Eatwell Guide \(food.gov.uk\)](https://www.food.gov.uk) – pictorial image and supporting guidance document
- [Nutrition Skills for Life®](#)
- [Love Food Hate Waste / Preventing food waste](#)
- [Welsh Veg in Schools - foodsensewales.org.uk](https://www.foodsensewales.org.uk)
- [Local Food Partnerships - foodsensewales.org.uk](https://www.foodsensewales.org.uk)
- [Food & Health \(bda.uk.com\)](https://www.bda.uk.com) – factsheets on variety of topics including food labelling, fluids, adolescent food facts etc
- [Guide-To-Food-Labeling-2019-WEB.pdf](#) – food labelling guidance documents and visual aids
- [Home \(foodfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.foodfoundation.org.uk)
- [One Blue Dot - Sustainable Diets \(bda.uk.com\)](https://www.bda.uk.com) / [AT-Lancet Commission Brief for Everyone - EAT \(eatforum.org\)](#) / [Sustainable healthy diets: guiding principles \(who.int\)](#) – food and the environment
- [Enticing-Effective-Everywhere-FINAL_1.pdf / 180507 Marketing Report.indd \(unicef.org\)](#) – industry influences
- [SACN statement on processed foods and health - summary report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) – ultra-processed foods
- [PHW opportunities for improving children’s health in Wales. The potential of school food](#) - background on school food.
- [FSN+Eating+well+recipe+book_Oct+2023_DIGITAL.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#) – family recipes
- [Reframing how we talk about children’s health and food](#) - support on how to frame health messages to children and young people
- [Portion sizes and food groups - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Data Sources

- SHRN: [School Health Research Network](#)
- [National Diet and Nutrition Survey 2019 to 2023 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- Welsh Government (2019) National Diet and Nutrition Survey: [National Diet and Nutrition Survey: results for years 1 to 9 | GOV.WALES](#)
- PHW Child Measurement Programme for Wales 2020: [Child Measurement Programme - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- Welsh Oral Health Information Unit: [Welsh Oral Health Information Unit - Research - Cardiff University](#)
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