



# FOOD FOR LIFE AND EAT SMART SHEFFIELD

A 3-YEAR IMPACT REPORT  
OCTOBER 2019 – OCTOBER 2022



eot smart  
SHEFFIELD

# A PARTNERSHIP FOR GOOD FOOD

In 2019, Sheffield City Council's Public Health team commissioned Learn Sheffield, the local experts in school improvement, to run a new 5-year programme focusing on a whole school and settings approach to food and nutrition.

Named Eat Smart Sheffield, the programme was designed to support Sheffield City Council's aims for improved health and education outcomes, as part of their overall Food Strategy.

Food for Life was subcontracted to provide the framework for embedding and sustaining a holistic approach to good food within Sheffield schools.

Our Food for Life School Award provides an action-oriented, evidence-based framework for change across the school environment.

Our Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) Award supports caterers to deliver healthy and sustainable meals. FFLSH provides them with the certification to evidence the quality of their food and procurement practices.

Food for Life has been delighted to work in partnership with Learn Sheffield and Sheffield City Council to effect change with schools across the city.

This report captures the impact of those 3 academic years of activity, focussing on the reach and the progress made by schools and caterers.



# WHAT IS THE FOOD FOR LIFE SCHOOL AWARD AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The Food for Life School Award, achieved in its entirety, evidences the following four outcomes:

1. That schools, the wider school community, and caterers have the opportunity, confidence, and know-how to access healthy and sustainable food.
2. That the school community has the skills and knowledge to make informed food choices, leading to healthy and sustainable food behaviours.
3. That school settings are equipped to change their food culture through a Whole School Approach.
4. That the wider health, education, and school meal systems are equipped for food culture change, by influencing stakeholders and strategy at local and national levels to adopt the Food for Life framework and ethos.

These four outcomes are mapped by schools submitting evidence against criteria across four pillars of activity:

1. Food quality and procurement (in partnership with their caterer)
2. Food education
3. Food policy and leadership
4. Communities and partnership



# SCHOOL REACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Eat Smart Sheffield originally identified 15 schools (12 primary & 3 secondary) for targeted support and encouraged them to work towards the Food for Life School Award. They were also given access to training (online & in-person), student placements in association with Sheffield Hallam University, and other local and national campaign-based interventions (such as **Sheffield is Sweet Enough**).

Despite the first two years of the programme being thrown off track by the Covid-19 pandemic, school reach and engagement has been positive as the data below shows. The rate of completion of Food for Life (FFL) awards has been lower than anticipated, but the complexities of the school environment during the pandemic have presented understandable barriers.

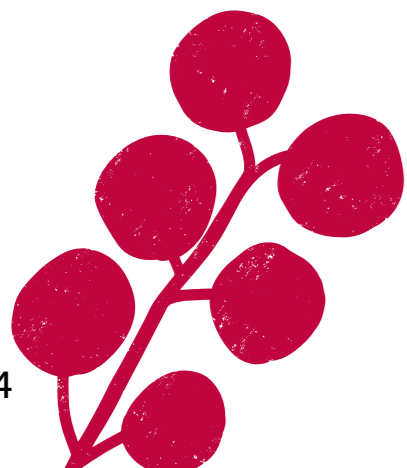
## WHAT IS THE 'WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH'?

The 'Whole School Approach' is the framework that guides the development of a healthy food culture in schools. This approach is endorsed by the head teacher, enshrined in the school development plan and school food policy, and permeates the whole school experience.

The approach ensures consistency: what is taught about food and healthy eating in lessons is reflected and reinforced in the daily life of the school, with the dining room becoming an extra classroom. Pupils are empowered to help guide the process, with the programme reaching out beyond the school gates into the wider community.

41 Sheffield schools have enrolled in the Food for Life School Award, evidencing their will to embed a Whole School Approach to food. 22 of these schools have started submitting criteria towards the award: these schools are represented in Table 1 (below). The criteria – capturing activity against Food Quality & Provenance; Food Education; Food Leadership; Communities & Partnerships – evidence the journey of change.

8 schools have enrolled in the Food for Life Membership programme, evidencing that they want to take their first steps towards a Whole School Approach to food. The Food for Life Membership package offers an introduction to the FFL ethos and scope, providing introductory resources to get schools started on their journey to a positive, child-centred food environment. The FFL Membership provides a launchpad for schools to then start working towards Bronze, Silver and then Gold award.



# 41 SCHOOLS ENROLLED

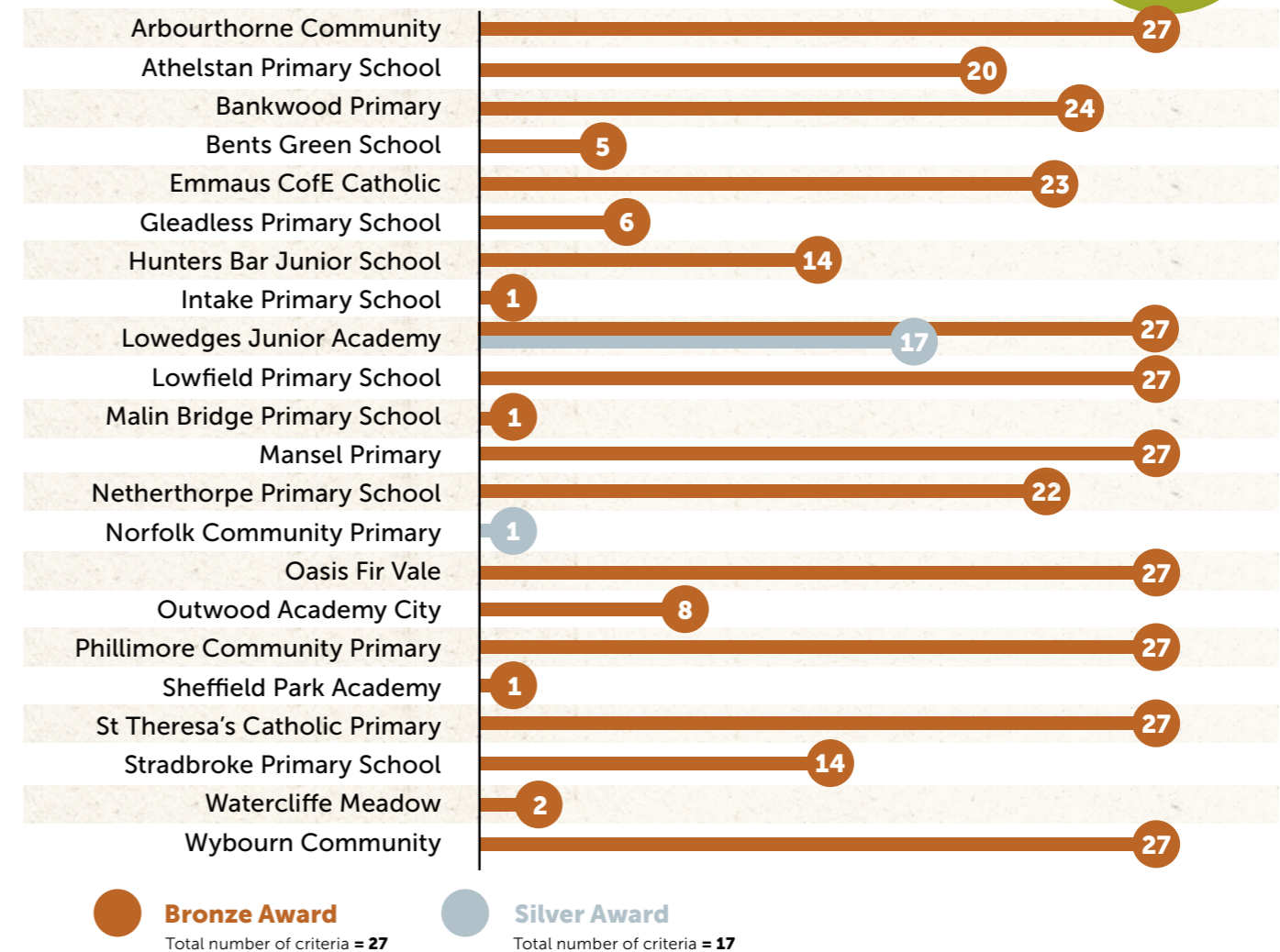
**8 BRONZE AWARDS**

**1 SILVER AWARD**

**22 SCHOOLS** HAVE SUBMITTED FFL CRITERIA

## SCHOOLS' PROGRESS TO BRONZE & SILVER FFL AWARDS

**Table 1:** data showing number of criteria submitted by each enrolled school, towards a total of 27



# SCHOOL SUBMISSIONS - A SNEAK PEEK



The stories that schools submit to us to evidence their food work are always inspiring and paint a picture of the change they are creating. Here are some FFL criteria submissions that our team has shared as examples of best practice.

**Mansell Primary's submission against criteria B4.1 – We make efforts to actively engage parents and/or the wider community:**

“ Due to Covid-19 we were unable to run our gardening project, so instead we made the decision to have a whole school growing activity. All the children from the 2-year-olds up to Year 6 joined in. Different year groups were growing different herbs including; parsley, basil, oregano and coriander. Every child planted their seeds in school and then took them home to finish off the growing process. Every child was given a leaflet that explains how to keep growing the herbs and what different meals they could be used for. Children have also been asked to take pictures of the herbs growing.

We are also planning a garden Project for the next academic year. Sadly, our caretaker passed away due to Covid-19, and we are going to create a garden space in his memory. We are going to be asking the community, including family and friends of the caretaker and the parents from the school, to help us get the garden ready. We are going to have plots for each year group, so they have a space to grow vegetables and herbs throughout the year.

”

**Phillimore Community Primary submitted this information to support achievement of criteria B2.3 – We keep parents and carers informed of lunch menus:**

“ We hold annual themed food weeks with a vegetarian or international theme. We invite parents/carers and other member of the school community such as governors to an open afternoon to get involved in all food related activities at school, [this is] partly to inform and partly to engage in. We have food to taste, examples of learning in Food Education lessons and what is on offer for school meals. [We also address] health issues connected with nutrition, e.g. Eat Well guidance and [guidance on] packed lunches, reducing sugar, and tooth decay. Taylor Shaw [school caterer] also provide tasting opportunities during parents' evenings, which are held once a term, and during school fairs.

”

**At the core of Food for Life's ethos and approach is the creation of the School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG), a forum in which caterers, school leaders, governors, community members, and pupils come together to drive an action plan that creates a healthy school food environment. Arbourthorne Community Primary submitted the following against criteria B2.0 – Our School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG):**

“ SNAG members involve members of our Senior Leadership Team, including the head teacher and executive head teacher, teachers, TAs [Teaching Assistants], parents, caterers, members from An Even Better Arbourthorne (a community-based project) and a local nutritionist. We meet once a term. The SNAG group has only formed this academic year and is planning to review school food culture, create an action plan and work to it. We plan to include parents and children in the writing of these strategies.

”



# SCHOOL TRAINING AND SUPPORT

A fundamental building block in Food for Life's approach revolves around building up the knowledge, skills and confidence of teachers so that they can positively influence the school food environment.

Much of this input is provided by the Eat Smart Sheffield Programme Manager, who provides personal 1:1 support to school staff through meetings (in person and online) and via school visits.

Food for Life supports this activity, with a team of specialised trainers that inform and inspire school staff around:

- Cooking in the classroom
- Edible growing to support the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 curriculum
- Pupil voice and School Nutrition Action Groups, linking to local farms
- And much more!

Prior to the restrictions imposed to keep us all safe during the pandemic, Food for Life delivered two training courses for Eat Smart Sheffield, deepening participant understanding of food education (Classroom Cooking and Plot to Pot).

**67** TOTAL TRAINEES REACHED

The below captures the range of training interventions that have been accessed by Sheffield schools between January 2020 and August 2022:

## FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

Total number of participants: 23



### CLASSROOM COOKING

Feb 2020 | 11 participants

### PLOT TO POT GROWING TRAINING

March 2020 | 12 participants

“It was brilliant”

Teacher at a secondary school who attended the cooking training session

“I can honestly say I've never learnt as much on any other training course than this”

Teacher of a primary school who attended the growing training session

“I can't wait to get back to school to start implementing what I've learnt”

Teacher of a primary school who attended the growing training session

## ONLINE WEBINARS

Total number of participants: 19



### SCHOOL NUTRITION ACTION GROUPS

July 2020 | 4 participants

### HEALTHY SNACKS AND PACKED LUNCHES

Nov 2020 | 9 participants

### OUTDOOR LEARNING

Nov 2020 | 6 participants

## ONLINE TRAINING UNITS

Total number of participants: 25



### SCHOOL FARMERS MARKETS

### FARM LINKS

### GET SHARING FOOD WITH YOUR COMMUNITY!

### GROWING FOR SCHOOLS

### SMART EATING! (FOR KITCHEN TEAMS)

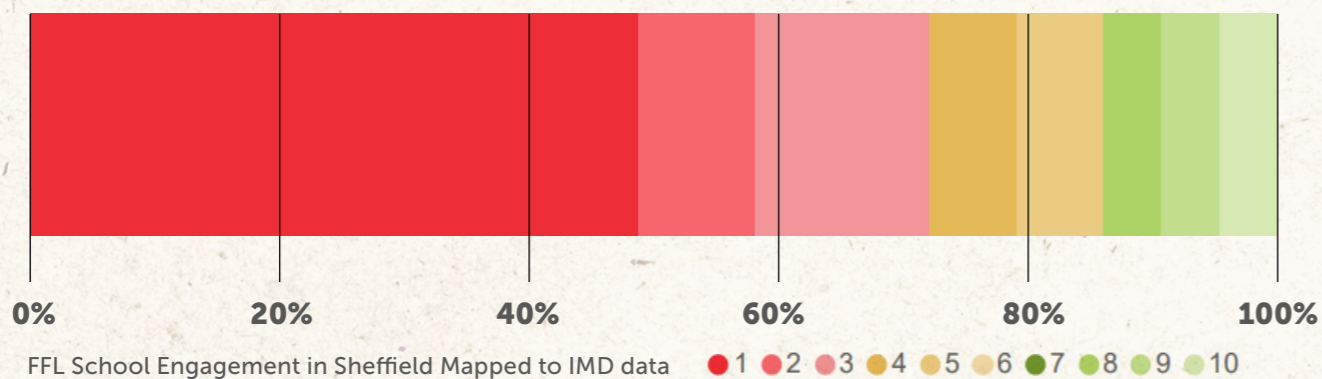
### HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

# WHO WE REACH

Through the Eat Smart Programme Manager, Food for Life's activity has been concentrated on schools in areas ranking high on the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Accordingly, this is where the greatest progress through the Food for Life School Award programme has been achieved, including one school ranking 1 on the IMD (the highest level of deprivation) achieving a FFL Silver Award. An average of 48% of pupils from engaged Food for Life schools in Sheffield are eligible to receive a free school meal.

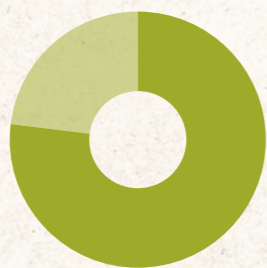
Our data tell us that a culture of healthy and sustainable eating is being built in schools whose pupils are set to gain the most benefit from a better food environment and improved food quality.

## SHEFFIELD INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION



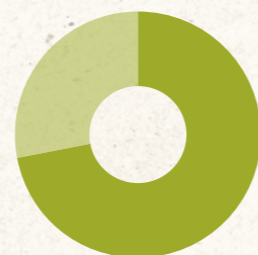
PERCENTAGE OF ENGAGED SCHOOLS RANKING 3 OR BELOW ON THE IMD

# 77%



# 72%

AVERAGE PROGRESSION THROUGH THE BRONZE FOOD FOR LIFE SCHOOL AWARD IN SCHOOLS RANKING 3 OR BELOW ON THE IMD



# HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL MEALS: OUR IMPACT ON CATERING IN SHEFFIELD



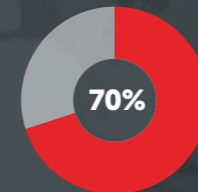
## 112 SCHOOLS

in Sheffield serve meals to children that are certified by **Food for Life Served Here at Bronze**



## 4 SCHOOLS

in Sheffield serve meals to children that are certified by **Food for Life Served Here at Silver**



This means that nearly **70% OF SCHOOLS IN SHEFFIELD** – with the commitment of forward-thinking caterers such as Taylor Shaw and Steel City Partnership – are showing their pupils, their families and the wider community that they are going beyond the nutritional requirements of School Food Standards, and are prioritising children's health, animal welfare, and social and environmental sustainability in their menus.







# 19,650






## THE REACH OF FOOD FOR LIFE SERVED HERE IN SHEFFIELD

19,650 children in Sheffield are being offered a meal each day that is guaranteed to meet School Food Standards, as well as a comprehensive set of certified standards to support health and sustainability.

## Food for Life Served Here Bronze certification evidences that caterers:

-  Use only **free range eggs**.
-  Have a minimum of **75% of dishes that are freshly prepared**, reducing the use of processed ingredients that are typically high in bad fats, salt and sugar.
-  Use no fish on the Marine Stewardship Councils' **Fish to Avoid** list.
-  Menus are seasonal and in-season produce is highlighted to pupils

## And in working towards Food for Life Served Here Silver, caterers aim to evidence that they:

-  Use a minimum **5% organic produce**, supporting ecosystem diversity, and farming for the future.
-  Use **local suppliers** that support local jobs and economic benefit, as well as reducing the impact on the environment.
-  **Go above and beyond** the mandatory School Food Standards and are taking steps to make healthy eating the easy choice.

# REACHING BEYOND SHEFFIELD SCHOOLS

Through Food for Life's work with Eat Smart Sheffield, we are committed to reach beyond the schools that are our primary focus.

## UNIVERSITIES

As part of the Eat Smart Sheffield programme, engaged schools are offered a student placement from Sheffield Hallam University. In addition, building on this excellent collaboration, Eat Smart Sheffield and Food for Life reached out to Sheffield Hallam with the aim of supporting improvements to the food offer and food education on campus. The university is exploring Food for Life Served Here certification and have been inspired by examples of student-led campaigns on other campuses across the UK.

## HOLIDAY ACTIVITY AND FOOD

More recently, this work has focussed on providing support so that Holiday Activity & Food (HAF) providers can improve their

knowledge, confidence and skills around healthy food and food education. These targeted, government-funded holiday intervention programmes have been designed to address the scourge of holiday hunger: 25,000 children across Sheffield in receipt of free school meals can access a HAF scheme for 6 weeks each year. In summer of 2022 alone, 11,478 children have benefitted from the scheme across Sheffield.

We've worked with Interactive Nutrition to ensure that many of the accessible, creative resources that Food for Life has produced are available to the 104 HAF providers in Sheffield.

This work has ensured that the quality of the messages and activities that children across Sheffield receive around food education and nutrition are consistent, whether during term time or the school holidays.



For more information or to get involved in Food for Life, contact Lisa Aldwin at [lisa.aldwin@learnsheffield.co.uk](mailto:lisa.aldwin@learnsheffield.co.uk)

For national enquiries please contact [fll@foodforlife.org.uk](mailto:fll@foodforlife.org.uk) or see

[www.foodforlife.org.uk](http://www.foodforlife.org.uk)

[f](https://www.facebook.com/SAFoodforLife) [i](https://www.instagram.com/SAFoodforLife) [@SAFoodforLife](https://www.twitter.com/SAFoodforLife)

FOOD FOR LIFE, C/O SOIL ASSOCIATION, SPEAR HOUSE, 51 VICTORIA STREET, BRISTOL BS1 6AD