

REPORT OF THE  
EXECUTIVE LEAD MEMBER  
**Children's Services**  
PART II

**135. SCHOOL MEAL PRICES FROM APRIL 2011**

1. The Executive Lead Member has approved that the price of school meals be maintained at the current level of £2.00 per meal from April 2011, for a third consecutive year. In Hampshire the price of a school meal is the same as the cost of a free school meal and prices apply to both Primary and Secondary schools.

2. This decision was possible in spite of the increased costs associated with the improved food and nutritional content of the meal and general cost pressures on catering services, because of the availability of the School Lunch Grant and a steady recovery in the number of pupil meals taken.

3. Recognising the widespread downturn in school meal numbers that followed the introduction of standards requiring healthier school lunches, the Government established the Schools Lunch Grant for the period 2008/9 to 2010/11. Under the Grant, the County Council was allocated £1,771,767 annually for three years. The grant provided support for the direct costs of school catering services (particularly food and labour) during what was regarded as a transitional period until school meal take up had increased and services based on healthier meals were firmly established. The funding was in addition to other expenditure for providing school meals and was not to replace funding already provided by the local authority or school. In Hampshire, the County Council does not subsidise the cost of school meals.

4. A proposal to allocate the Schools Lunch Grant by formula based on the number of free school meals provided, plus 25 percent of the school's number on roll, was agreed by Schools Forum in December 2007 and confirmed annually. As the largest provider of school meals within schools, the County Council's in-house service, HC3S, was allocated a large proportion of the grant funding. Any surplus funds generated during the Grant period were expected to be available to be reinvested in the service.

5. Nearly 6 million meals were served in the County Council's primary schools in 2009/10 and 21 percent of those were to pupils eligible for free meals. In terms of meal numbers in primary schools the overall picture was positive and total numbers for the current year show an increase of around 8 percent over the same period two years ago.

6. The school meals service plays an important role in the development of 'healthy eating' and supports the local economic development agenda.

7. The report arises from consideration of the report by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 28 January 2011 which is on Hantsweb at: [http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemsummary.htm?pref=Y&tab=1&item\\_ID=2546&cancel=n](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemsummary.htm?pref=Y&tab=1&item_ID=2546&cancel=n)

### **136. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN HAMPSHIRE, 2010: RESULTS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES**

1. The Executive Lead Member has noted the school assessment, test and examination results for 2010 and approved the priorities that stem from them.

2. High levels of educational attainment are essential: for future economic prosperity for the nation, for individuals and for those individuals' future families. They provide choice for young people in relation to how they will spend their adult lives. They mean that young people are better equipped to play their part as citizens. The knowledge-based, global economy that Britain has become means that the number of unskilled jobs is shrinking rapidly. Education has a responsibility to unlock the potential of every child and young person because we need the contribution of all of them – to support themselves, not be dependent on the state and to support others.

3. Overall, Hampshire's children and young people have performed well in assessments, tests and examinations and attained standards higher than in previous years and higher than those attained by children and young people who attend school in statistically similar areas of the country. Children from many black and minority ethnic groups have continued to do well in Hampshire; those with special needs have again made progress in Hampshire schools; those in care have done better than in previous years and the most able continue to progress well.

4. Whilst the levels of attainment, as measured by test and examination outcomes, have risen in Hampshire, there remain some areas of relative weakness or of insufficient progress. The gap between those eligible for free school meals (FSM) and those who are not has increased slightly in 2010. From its lowest point of 31 percent in 2008, the gap is now 33 percent. The attainment of those on free school meals and those who are not have both increased but those on free school meals have improved at a slower rate than the rest of the Hampshire school population. "Closing the Gap," remains a significant issue for schools in Hampshire.

5. In order to continue to make progress on these achievements and address future priorities, areas for the Children's Services Department to focus on were identified and approved. These include supporting schools to implement curriculum reforms, particularly with regard to the Primary curriculum and in preparation for the English Baccalaureate. Taking action to ensure consistently high attainment in core subjects such as English and mathematics. Focusing more work on improving the support for vulnerable children, including Children in Care. Targeting resource more effectively to those districts, settings and schools where progress, or headline results, are least strong and the gap in attainment most wide. Supporting schools in reducing persistent absence where it is high and supporting good behaviour to ensure all Hampshire schools have an Ofsted rating of 'good' or 'outstanding' for behaviour.

6. The report arises from consideration of the report by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 28 January 2011 which is on Hantsweb at: [http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemsummary.htm?pref=Y&tab=1&item\\_ID=2393&cancel=n](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemsummary.htm?pref=Y&tab=1&item_ID=2393&cancel=n)

COUNCILLOR ROY PERRY  
Executive Lead Member for Children's Services