

## **JOHNNIE HAMPTON, CROSSBENCH PEER AT HOUSE OF LORDS, AND TEACHER OF DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY AT MOSSBOURNE COMMUNITY ACADEMY - WRITTEN EVIDENCE (FDO0009)**

Following a conversation with Baroness Walmsley at an APPG I was asked to record my thoughts as a teacher about school meals:

Students at our school (11-18 academy in a deprived part of Hackney with over 50% Pupil Premium) are not allowed to bring money or mobile phones into schools. This is policed strictly with bag searches if these or other contraband is suspected. Pupils up to the age of 16 are not allowed out of the school during the school day (08.20-4.20) Food is only allowed to be consumed in the school canteen, there are no vending machines. Once a week, each year is allowed to go to the canteen at break for snacks, usually a waffle or slice pizza.

School lunches are a choice of hot meal with vegetables, vegetarian or meat option ie lasagne with green beans and sweetcorn; a 'grab and go' baked potato or pasta; or baguette with choice of fillings. There is always a pudding of cooky or fresh fruit salad. The standard is excellent. Friday always has the option of fish and chips or a vegan option.

Students, unless they are in a club or detention will have to be in the playground mixing with their peers or playing informal basketball games or table tennis.

I also teach food and nutrition which is compulsory in years 7 and 8. They are taught the ethics of food choices, carbon footprint, food miles, animal welfare etc as well as how to avoid waste and budget for a family. We cook dishes such as couscous salad, apple crumble, Spaghetti Bolognese, pizza and Jamaican Patties. Students are given the recipes to take home and encouraged to cook for their households. Muslim students use Halal ingredients which is important as at least 1/3 of our students are Muslims.

I frequently tell the students that a meal is one of the best ways of getting a group of people together. Whether it's family or a group of friends when they have left home, it's a fun inexpensive way to meet and talk. Bringing a course each, mixing and matching is far more fun and

cheaper than going out. I also point out that for not much more than a pound they can buy potatoes, onions and carrots as well as a stock cube that can make a healthy delicious soup meal for 4. Take aways or ready meals are expensive and deeply unhealthy.

*26 March 2024*