



Food and Drink purchased 'Through the School Gate'

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Information for schools

An introduction to the study:

The food served in schools is regulated and must meet the school food standards so that children have healthy, balanced diets, but there is currently no regulation on the food and drinks available outside of school or on the food sold during break time in school. Evidence suggests that young people's access to food and drink, particularly energy dense foods and drinks, sold in outlets beyond the school gate is a potential contributor to less healthy eating habits, which often underpins overweight and obesity.

The aim of our study is to explore the influence of the food environment, socio-economic deprivation and other factors including peers and family influence on the food and drinks purchased and consumed by 13 to 15 year olds throughout the school day.

An overview of the study:

Below is a brief overview of what is involved for schools participating in the study with further detail provided in the 'details and methodology' section:

1. Classroom introduction to the research (**15 minutes during lesson time or registration, or can be done in the same session as the questionnaire is completed**)
2. Questionnaire administered during class time (**30-40 minutes during lesson time**)
3. Interviews with the Head and Kitchen Supervisor
4. Observations of the school dining environment and food service areas
5. Focus groups with one Year 8 and one Year 9 group during class time (**50 minutes during lesson time**)

Day 1: Talk to classes of year 8 and year 9 to explain the research (**15 minutes required**) **and** Administer online food and drink questionnaire during class time ****PC/laptops/tablets required (Full lesson required)**

Day 1: Research team observe school dining environment; interview head teacher and kitchen supervisor

Day 2: One focus group with year 8s and one with year 9s during class time (**Full lesson required**)

*Please note: these days do not need to be consecutive or within the same week

Details and methodology of the project:

1. We will introduce the research project during a classroom meeting where we will present the outline of the research project, explain what is involved for students and answer any questions they may have.
 - a. Students will be asked to sign a consent form if they wish to take part
 - b. This session will take approximately **10 minutes** and can take place at a convenient time for schools (form time, PSHE, or another time that suits the teacher/school) and can take place at the same time as the questionnaire session,
2. Administer an online food and drink questionnaire during class time. **This session will take the duration of one lesson (30-40 minutes)**
 - a. We need these sessions to be in a computer room or in a room with access to the internet and computers/laptops/tablets so that the survey can be completed online
 - b. We will be flexible to the needs and timetables of the school in terms of where and when the questionnaire will be administered
3. We would like to conduct several interviews with **school staff** to include the head teacher, kitchen supervisor and/or other staff, and a school governor where possible.
4. The research team will **observe** where students buy and eat food in the school during break and lunch time and will take photographs but these will not be used beyond the research team, if they identify students.
5. Focus groups with year 8 and year 9
 - a. We will explore in more detail some of the answers from the questionnaire and will involve one year 8 and one year 9 class through some focus groups
 - b. These sessions will be ideally held in the lesson classroom
 - c. This session will last the duration of **one lesson**