

**CONCORDAT BETWEEN  
THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY  
AND  
THE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES**

**Introduction**

1. This Concordat sets out an agreed framework for co-operation between the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). It is not a legally binding agreement or a contract between the FSA and DCSF, nor is it intended to cover every detailed aspect of the relationship between the two departments. Rather, it is a statement of the principles which will guide relations between the FSA and DCSF to ensure sufficient communication and co-ordination to enable each to discharge their respective responsibilities effectively. The concordat is also intended to contribute to meeting the need for the FSA to promote links with other government departments, amongst others, to ensure effective consultation, as specified in the Food Standards Act (1999). The Concordat cannot override the statutory duties and powers of either the FSA or DCSF. The concordat will be published.

**General Principles**

2. In particular, FSA and DCSF agree:
  - to keep each other promptly and regularly informed about all work in which the other department has an interest;
  - to give appropriate consideration to the other department's views;
  - to request advice in good time, together with an account of its expected use;
  - to inform the other department without delay of any relevant information which would require their action;

- to provide each other with as full and open access as possible to scientific, technical and policy information, and research and surveillance findings;

### **Division of Responsibilities**

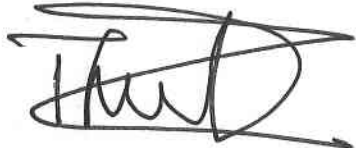
3. The respective remits of FSA and DCSF are as set out in Annex A. Areas of particular mutual interest include matters which have a bearing on the provision of food in schools (including school lunches and food provided at other times of the day), the teaching of food hygiene, nutrition and related subjects (and any changes to the curriculum which would affect the teaching of these subjects), and the nutritional status of school aged children. These are consequently areas that will benefit from close-co-operation between the FSA and DCSF.

### **Food and Nutrition**

4. DCSF is responsible, through compulsory minimum nutritional standards among others, for ensuring food provided in schools is healthy and that curriculum messages are consistent, as part of a whole school approach. The FSA will provide DCSF, as required, with scientific and technical advice in relation to monitoring the compulsory nutritional standards. The FSA will also provide advice to the DCSF on healthy eating, as required, for the development of support on a whole school approach to food.
5. The FSA will provide advice, as required, on the healthy eating component of the National Healthy Schools Standard, which forms part of the Department of Health/DCSF Healthy Schools Programme.
6. FSA will consult DCSF over any educational resources on nutrition and healthy eating developed or funded by the FSA for potential use in schools.

7. DCSF will inform the FSA, and consult as appropriate, of new policies and/or changes to existing policies of mutual interest, including issues relating to school food and curriculum developments.
8. **Parliamentary and other business**
9. Correspondence, Parliamentary Questions and other enquiries, which are wrongly directed or assigned, will be redirected as normal between departments. The FSA and DCSF will co-operate to ensure that enquiries relating to the responsibilities of both departments receive replies that reflect the position of both in respect of their individual areas of responsibility.
10. **Operation and Reviewing of Bilateral Concordats**
11. The FSA and DCSF are committed, wherever possible, to solving any disagreements under this concordat through normal administrative channels. If necessary and appropriate, matters will be pursued through the normal government machinery.
12. Amendments to this concordat may be made at any time by agreement between the FSA and DCSF. In addition this agreement will be kept under regular review at intervals to be agreed between the FSA and DCSF, and be updated as necessary in the light of experience of its operation in practice.

Signed by:



Chief Executive  
Food Standards Agency



Acting Permanent Secretary  
DCSF

## **ANNEX A: The Remits of the Food Standards Agency and the Department for Children, Schools and Families.**

### **The Remit of the Food Standards Agency**

The main objective of the FSA is to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food, including risks caused by the way in which it is produced or supplied, and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. Under the Food Standards Act 1999, the FSA have responsibility for the development of policy and for the provision of advice, information and assistance, in respect of matters connected with food safety or other interests of consumers in relation to food (including nutrition and food allergy), to public authorities (Ministers, governments departments and their equivalents in the devolved authorities, local authorities or agencies of government – including the School Food Trust), and to the general public or to individuals and bodies who are not public authorities.

In delivering this remit in relation to schools the FSA has developed, consulted upon and published nutrition and food hygiene knowledge and skills required by young people to live independent lives<sup>1</sup>. These [food] competencies provide building blocks by age for the Agency's work in relation to children and young people within and outside the education setting. The [food] competencies also form the central component of the principles for school based activity taken forward by the Agency<sup>2</sup>.

### **The Remit of the Department for Children, Schools and Families**

The remit of DCSF insofar as it relates to issues of mutual interest to the FSA is to ensure that, through compulsory nutritional standards, all pupils have the opportunity to have a healthy and enjoyable lunch and that healthy food

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/competenciesconsensus.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/schoolcoreprinciples.pdf>

and drink options should be available throughout the day and are encouraged to eat more healthily. This will help them to achieve their potential, both at school and, in later life.

Through the National Curriculum, all children will be taught the principles of food safety and hygiene and how to follow safe procedures when preparing food. They will also be taught about the need for a balanced diet containing bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy food, fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, eggs beans and other non-dairy sources of protein, and milk and dairy foods.

The National Healthy School Programme underpins the DCSF nutritional standards and the National Curriculum healthy eating messages through requiring schools to have an identified member of the senior management team responsible for overseeing all aspects of food in schools, including staff training, and to involve young people and their parents/carers in choosing menus and in creating a welcoming eating environment.