The 'Big Eat In' Follow-up Study

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction
In April 2011, Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) commissioned the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen) to conduct qualitative research with school staff and Secondary 1 (S1) and Secondary 2 (S2) pupils in relation to lunchtime stay-on-site policies. The research was conduced in four secondary schools in Glasgow: two had been involved in the original Big Eat In (BEI) pilot study and the other two had recently established their own stay-on-site policies.

Aims and methods
The main aim of the research was to explore facilitators and barriers to successful, sustainable lunchtime stay-on-site policies for junior secondary school pupils. The specific objectives included:
1. To explore the nutritional attitudes and behaviour of junior secondary pupils in secondary schools with existing and new stay-on-site policies
2. To gauge staff views regarding the importance and manageability of stay-on-site policies, including barriers and facilitating factors to the operation and sustainability of such approaches in BEI and 'new' schools.

In-depth interviews were conducted with ten members of school staff in the four schools. Nine focus groups were conducted in total with S1 and S2 pupils in the four schools.

Results
The lunchtime stay-on-site policies were reported to be a success by school staff and were seen to offer multiple benefits such as increased pupil safety, larger numbers of pupils eating a healthy lunch, better relations within the school between staff and pupils, and pupils settling in more quickly to secondary school. Amongst staff, there was a lot of support for the stay-on-site policy to be continued in their school, and for the policy to be rolled out to more widely to other secondary schools in Glasgow. The views amongst pupils were mixed, with some supporting the continuation of the stay-on-site policy and others objecting to what was perceived to be an infringement of their rights. The most negative pupil views were reported by S1 pupils in the school with the strictest stay-on-site policy.

Many perceived facilitators and barriers to successful stay-on-site policies were cited by both staff and pupils. Issues that were raised in the BEI pilot study, such as the quality of food and the school menu, meal deals being offered by outlets outside school, the canteen environment and peer pressure, were reiterated. The fact that these issues were perceived to be potential facilitators or barriers by different respondents emphasises how difficult it is to tailor such a policy to satisfy all viewpoints. New issues were also raised. Lunchtime activities for S1s appeared to be a more minor feature of the stay-on-site policies than previously, and arguably this resulted in the entire policy becoming less appealing for pupils. However, new developments such as mobile vending units, as well as coffee bar-style outlets, within schools were praised by respondents.

Conclusions
School lunchtime stay-on-site policies were perceived as being successful, with the benefits conferred by the initiatives outweighing any drawbacks. However, if these initiatives are to continue, thought should be given to important elements, such as lunchtime activities, as these were viewed very positively by pupils and staff. Also, new developments such as the mobile vending units and coffee bars should be promoted and assessed, as they have the potential to enhance greatly the value of stay-on-site policies.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Background to 'The Big Eat In' Initiative

Scottish children and young people follow a diet that falls short of national recommendations and is less healthy than that of other European countries.[1] Poor diet can contribute to excessive weight-gain.[2] Increasing levels of child and adult obesity are already damaging health and well-being – experts have called for greater, concerted, system wide action on what they regard as a 'public health time bomb.'[3] Scotland, as a country, has the second highest population level of obesity in the world (second only to the US), although it should be recognised that not every country collects these data.[4] Findings from the Scottish Health Survey 2010[5] showed that 29.9% of children (31.1% of boys and 28.5% of girls) were overweight or obese.

The Scottish Government's 2007 *Better Health, Better Care Action Plan*[6], sets out a strategy for a healthier Scotland and outlines how funding will be allocated to tackle obesity through dietary and physical activity programmes. The Scottish Government's overall strategy relating to diet, physical activity and obesity is set out in the 2008 publication *Healthy Eating, Active Living: An action plan to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackle obesity (2008-2011).*[7] This includes a series of actions aimed at all levels: individuals, schools, care and community settings, workplaces, industry and food producers. The Schools Health Promotion and Nutrition Act (Scotland) has built on earlier policies such as Hungry for Success[8] to embed school based provision and promotion of healthy food and drinks in legislation.[9] The SG publication, 'Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A route map towards healthy weight'[10] states that one of its priorities will be to control exposure to foods that are high in energy.

Poor diet is therefore recognised as a significant contributor to Scotland's poor health record. Improving children's diet can have a major impact on the health of children with beneficial outcomes for educational attainment, physical well being and improved health later in life. Healthy eating patterns established in childhood are more likely to lead to healthy eating later in life. The Scottish Government published its Obesity Route Map Action Plan[11] in 2011. It recognises the important role that schools have in terms of equipping young people with the skills to choose or purchase healthy food, and to provide activities for young people to gain skills and confidence to enjoy more active lives. Curriculum for Excellence[12] has an important role to play in this, as does the Active Schools policy which is designed to encourage young people to be involved in physical activity and sporting opportunities outwith PE lessons[13].

The school environment therefore has a vital role to play in providing healthy food and drinks to pupils. Glasgow City Council (GCC) has been very active in its efforts to establish healthy eating throughout its schools, with a range of initiatives. Previous evaluations of these initiatives suggest that they have been well received, particularly within the primary school sector, by pupils, parents and school staff.[14]

Changes to school food policy and practice within secondary schools have been particularly challenging. Large numbers of secondary school pupils are leaving school premises at lunchtime to purchase food and drinks of poor nutritional value from external food outlets and mobile vans. There was a slight increase in the percentage of secondary school pupils taking school meals in 2011 compared with

2010 (41.6% versus 39.6%), but as a minority are taking school meals it is clear there is scope for improvement.[15] Nonetheless, qualitative research conducted by the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen) with primary and secondary pupils, and parents in 2007, found that despite their reservations about the changes to school based provision of food and drinks, pupils and parents thought that healthy school food provision and promotion was having a positive influence in school and at home and that it should continue.[16] There was also some limited support in response to potential measures to encourage secondary school pupils to remain on the school premises at lunchtime, although partial restriction (i.e. restrictions only applying on a few days per week) seemed to be viewed more favourably than a blanket restriction, and a pilot exercise was suggested as a sensible first step.

1.2   Implementation of 'The Big Eat In' Initiative

A pilot exercise, designed to encourage Secondary 1 (S1) pupils to stay within the school grounds at lunchtime, was conducted in eight secondary schools in Glasgow for the full 2009/2010 academic year. As part of this 'Big Eat In' initiative, a holistic approach was used to create an enjoyable, healthy, active lunchtime where a healthy lunch featured but did not dominate.

In order to assess the impact of this pilot initiative in the participating schools and to inform future school food policy, GCPH commissioned the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen) to conduct an evaluation of the 'Big Eat In'[17]. The pilot was reported to be a success and that such an approach would confer health benefits, and would enable the safety of S1s to be monitored more closely. The uptake of school lunches among secondary pupils was seen to increase in the pilot schools. As a result of this evaluation the lunchtime stay-on-site policy was continued in the existing pilot schools, and also adopted by a number of other secondary schools in Glasgow.

As schools implemented the existing and new stay-on-site policies during the 2010-2011 school year, GCPH commissioned the ScotCen to carry out additional research to explore factors involved in successful and sustainable lunchtime stay-on-site policies.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Aim of the research

The main aim of the research was to explore facilitators and barriers to successful, sustainable lunchtime stay-on-site policies for junior secondary school pupils.

2.2 Research objectives

The specific objectives of the research were:

1. To investigate the practical implementation of stay-on-site policies and programmes underway in Glasgow secondary schools, in light of issues and factors known to be important such as physical/social environment, management of queues, etc
2. To explore the impact of stay-on-site policies on nutritional attitudes and behaviour of S2 pupils who participated in the Big Eat In (BEI) in 2009-2010
3. To explore the nutritional attitudes and behaviour of junior secondary pupils in secondary schools with existing and new stay-on-site policies
4. To gauge staff views regarding the importance and manageability of stay-on-site policies, including barriers and facilitating factors to the operation and sustainability of such approaches in BEI and 'new' schools

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Four schools were invited to participate in the research study: two existing Big Eat In (BEI) schools and two 'new' stay-on-site schools.

The following research was conducted:

- Staff interviewees (2-3 per school): Interviewees were members of the senior management team, catering staff members, school year heads and individuals running lunchtime activities, etc.
- Pupil focus groups (2-3 per school): The following groups were convened: In 'new' stay-on-site schools: two Secondary 1 (S1) minigroups; In existing BEI schools: one S1 and two Secondary 2 (S2) minigroups.

In total, 10 interviews were carried out with members of school staff. Six minigroups were convened with S1 pupils, and three with S2 groups. In one of the existing BEI schools, it was only possible to convene one S2 minigroup.

Guide to Codes Used in Respondents' Quotes

Coding used in respondents' quotes presented in the report comprises:

- Identification code for each school: A to D
- Respondent or focus group number

Some examples of how codes are used are given below:

[Respondent C1] corresponds to a staff interviewee from School C; Respondent 1 from this school. N.B. School staff Respondent numbers are 1-3.
[Focus Group B4 S1] corresponds to pupil focus group from School B; 4 is the code of group (all pupil groups are coded 4-6); S1 = the year of the pupils in the group.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Operation of stay on-site policy

The existing 'Big Eat In' schools noted that there had been some changes to the lunchtime policy since the operation of the original pilot. Overall, the activities programme tended to have become more limited (see Section 4.1.7), and the focus of the initiatives had also changed slightly with, for example, healthy eating being promoted more actively. Staff from the two schools which had newly adopted lunchtime stay-on-site policies spoke of reasons for the initiatives being launched. These reasons included concerns over the food being consumed at outlets outside school, pupil safety and a reported decrease in pupil numbers attending the canteen.

… the first year we did it, there probably wasn't a huge emphasis on the healthy eating as there should have been, and we've made sure that this is the case this year, you know? …nobody's been able to walk about with fattening juice or foods of any sort, you know, so there's been a bigger emphasis on the healthy eating this year [Respondent C1]

…we were partly very quickly ending up with a fairly quiet canteen. We had a lot of pupils who were hanging about at the local ASDA and some other chip shops… and we also then had a van… which was selling … 'Koka Noodles';… which we actually reckon was really, really poor quality. So we decided, after consulting the Parent Council and basically informing the parents, but looking to make sure that we had support, that our intention was to try to encourage the pupils to stay in school… partly for safety, partly because they'd be getting a better diet… [Respondent B1]

4.1.1 Enforcement and encouragement models

Each school operated a slightly different model in terms of the operation of the stay-on-site lunchtime policy, which ranged from strict enforcement to encouragement of pupils to stay in school at lunchtime.

The original 'Big-Eat-In' schools did not adopt a strict enforcement model, preferring to educate their pupils about the benefits of staying in (healthier food, safety etc) and encouraging them to stay on site by providing activities and clubs for the Secondary 1s (S1s). Whilst some pupils did stay in and take advantage of the activities on offer at these schools, it was recognised that the message was not always getting across to pupils as respondents were aware of S1s "voting with their feet". Nevertheless, this encouragement approach was proposed as the best approach by these schools.

… the whole ethos of the programme was about encouragement and education of the young people rather than enforcement, so that's been the case again this year.
[Respondent A1]

And again, over there, there's been 1 or 2 occasions when they've brought in the cans of Coke an' all that, and they've been spoken to about the reason behind the club, and the philosophy of the Big Eat In is pushed regularly at assemblies as well, and I encourage all the pupils-you know, even if they've never been in the past-to come along and try it out. [Respondent C1]

At the other end of the spectrum, the new schools tended to enforce the ban more strictly on S1s going out at lunchtime. This involved, on occasion, patrols going outside during the lunch break, with pupils who were found outside the school grounds being brought back to school. Some of these pupils were then punished with detention or tasks such as litter pick-up. It was also stated that while these schools did not tend to give these punishments in the first instance, they did if there was evidence of repeat offences as they wanted to make it clear to pupils that they would not be allowed out in the longer term.

It is enforced but quite gently in the beginning (but)… miscreants that keep doing it get into trouble [Respondent D1]

In the schools with stricter regimes, there was some resistance to the enforcement of the stay-on-site policy but it was felt better to have a clear policy even if it potentially caused a bit of conflict between pupils and the school. However, staff wanted to reach the point whereby pupils had accepted the policy and would consider it the norm to stay in school at lunchtime; the interviews suggested that this had occurred.

Pupils were aware of the level of enforcement of the stay-on-site policy. A stricter enforcement model did appear to deter pupils from leaving school at lunchtime and pupils talked about their behaviour being influenced or changed due to the consequences of leaving school at lunchtime.

… our pals in other schools are like in first year and they just go oot for their lunch, but we need to stay in…

But they're not actually allowed out. They just…they just sneak out. But, see if they get caught, nothing happens. That's why they just do it anyway. But we know that something happens.'

I used tae.. At the start o' school, I used to always sneak oot o' school and go to ASDA an' that.

I: Right. So what happened? Did you get caught at any time?

Aye. You get caught, and you dae litter picking.
[Focus Group B4 S1]

As might be expected, pupils expressed a preference to be encouraged rather than coerced to stay in school, and this was almost certainly because it allowed them more latitude to leave the school grounds at lunchtime. Some pupils indicated that if the strict enforcement regime had not been in place they would have gone out of the school at lunchtime. However, some S2 pupils who had previously been 'forced' to stay in school in S1 suggested that such a strong policy may be counterproductive and that a ban on going out made pupils more determined to leave the school grounds at lunchtime. The staff respondents reported that as the academic year went on, it became increasingly difficult to keep S1 pupils in school at lunchtime.

Well, in first year when you're forced to stay in, I don't think people like it that much. They went out more probably 'cause they didn't want to be forced to do something…

And also like we're not forced to stay in, and yet we still stay in quite a lot, so it's not as if they…

Yeah. I'd say we go out.. we went out more in the first year, 'cause now we stay in most o' the time, so...
[Focus Group C6 S2]

4.1.2   Promotion of the lunchtime policies

The stay-on-site policy was promoted in various ways to both pupils and parents. For example, pupils were informed about the activities and food on offer in the schools at assemblies, through tannoy announcements and on plasma screens around the schools. Parents were informed about the initiative through letters and leaflets and were asked to support the initiative by encouraging their child(ren) to eat in school and take part in activities, if relevant.

Now and then, we perhaps send out a letter to parents simply reminding them that we are operating this, and looking for their support in encouraging their sons or daughters to stay in. [Respondent B1]

We certainly push it quite heavy at the start, ...and sometimes we talk to parents about encouraging pupils to, but we can't force them to stay in school.
[Respondent C1]

In addition, some schools operated a buddy-system whereby at the beginning of the school year, S1s had an older pupil as a buddy who looked after them and helped them settle in. This also included having lunch in school and taking part in the activities.

Some staff felt that the activities would be a strong draw for pupils and that they would stay in to take part in them. Participation in activities/clubs was dependent on having a healthy meal (whether in the canteen or in the form of a packed lunch). Some respondents thought that perhaps the activities were promoted more and above the school dinner. However, it was also suggested that due to cuts in funding, there was less promotion of the initiatives, and indeed fewer initiatives, this academic year (2010-2011).

The thing aboot this year I would say is that I don't feel it was promoted by Education as well... actually in the school. The school felt that they should have been gave printed posters promoting it more, whereas we're kinda running wi' the tiny wee ones we had last year. And there wasnae any leaflets gave out to parents as far as I'm aware, to promote it, although I certainly feel that the school and the teachers have been promoting the clubs type o' thing side of thing, but from dining room point of view I don't feel it was advertised enough in school [Respondent C3]

4.1.3   Primary 7 expectations

Staff felt that it was important to manage the pupils' expectations and to make pupils aware early on of the stay-on-site policy in place at the school. This was done in a number of ways: some primary feeder schools did not allow their Primary 7 (P7) pupils to leave school at lunchtime although other schools did allow pupils to leave as

some pupils reported being allowed out in P7; P7 pupils visiting the school as part of the induction would be informed about the stay-on-site policy at the school, and the 'buddy system' would aim to encourage the new S1s to eat in the school canteen (see above).

We've branched out a wee bit, in terms of the new primary 7s that are coming up they will be introduced to us all before they even come to the school, so they'll know what to expect. [Respondent C1]

S1 pupils expressed some disappointment that they were not allowed out during their first year, as they had expected that they would be able to leave the school at lunchtime (this was especially the case in the school with the strictest ban on going outside at lunchtime).

Yeah I was really looking forward to going out but then was really disappointed when I heard that we had to stay in. My school was right across from (name of outlets) and we never got to go out so I was looking forward to getting out at high school
[Focus group B4 S1]

4.1.4   Current practice/changes in practice among P7s

A few S1 pupils did indicate that they had changed their eating habits since primary school such as having school lunch rather than a pack lunch. This was reportedly due to a variety of reasons such as school meals being better in secondary school, more options being available and that eating in the canteen was quicker and easier. Those pupils in the school with the strictest enforcement policy indicated that they took school lunches because there were few other options available to them.

I have school dinners because it's quick and easy and I thought it would be a change from packed lunches in primary school and I thought that when I came to secondary school I would be allowed out but then we had to stay in, so it was a bit of a disappointment [Focus Group B4 S1]

In a few instances, pupils who stayed in school indicated that it was their choice to stay in and they did so regardless of any ban (if in place) or any activities being run, as they enjoyed sitting, chatting and relaxing with friends during the lunch break. Pupils taking a packed lunch often did so because they felt that there was little on offer in the canteen that they liked or that they had allergies to certain foods. A minority of pupil respondents also indicated that they like to vary their eating practice; on some days they liked to eat in the school canteen, whilst on other days they preferred to go outside school. What they did depended on how they felt, the availability of sufficient money or time, what the weather was like, the type of food on offer at school and if any activities were being run.

I eat here, but sometimes I go out to the van if I can be bothered.

I get my lunch in here, and if I have money I go out to the van and go up to the game club up the stair.
[Focus group A4 S1]

4.1.5   Food on offer in school

The food on offer at the schools was similar to that of previous years and included a range of hot meals (fish and chips, curry, lasagne), a burger bar, baked potatoes, sandwiches/panini, salad boxes, soup, fruit and yoghurt etc. Drinks on offer included milk, water and low sugar fruit juices. Catering staff were making an effort to develop meals that would appeal to young people (such as pot noodles and pasta) but, of course, had to ensure that they met the strict nutritional criteria in place.

I've got posters up outside. 'Pick up a pasta'. We do that at lunchtime, but we've cut it down to just doing the 6 a day the now. It's quite quiet. We're trying to .. we're trying to do this instead of the pot noodles. So you can either use noodles or pasta. And we put Bolognese .. pasta Bolognese in these tubs that they can take away into the social area if they if they want to go... We do Thai chicken, cheese sauce, or spicy tomato. So things like that, just... something different
[Respondent B3]

In addition, schools were introducing and piloting new initiatives such as vending banks, a mobile unit and a coffee shop. These initiatives aimed at providing an alternative in-school dining experience; they were said to look more attractive and also offered different types of food such as raisins, milkshakes, hot chocolate and fizzy drinks (all adhering to nutritional guidelines). The mobile unit (in the process of being trialled) was to be positioned outside the canteen, in the social area and it was hoped that pupils passing it might choose to eat there rather than go outside of school.

Well, they're gonna be a hot and a cold one, and we realise a lot o' kids want it fast, so it's gonna be in wee pots. So there'll be pasta, baked potatoes, lots o' healthy salad goods. You know? There'll be rice and pitta bread, wraps. All that kind of thing. And everything of course will meet the criteria for, you know, healthy eating, so I am quite excited about it. [Respondent A3]

It was argued that it was not just the food in schools that had to appeal to young people but also the atmosphere and the manner in which food was served. For example, the coffee shop was designed to look different from the rest of the canteen; it had bar stools and although it was sited in the school canteen it had its own unique atmosphere and appearance. Staff were acutely aware that they were in 'competition' with food outlets on the outside, and that they needed to be innovative in what food they offered pupils in school as well as how it was presented.

Kids want to get away at lunchtime. I mean you maybe do… the same yourself when you're at work. You want to get out and get a bit o' fresh air and just get away from the whole scene, so you understand that. So it's not just the food. We've got to look at everything. [Respondent A3]

4.1.6   Food on offer outside school

Three of the four schools had either a van and/or shops, such as take-aways, within a short distance from the school gates – the school which was said to be furthest from these outlets was estimated to be only a 5 minute walk away (In the other school, it was estimated as a 10 minute walk). The perception was that the pupils tended to buy the more unhealthy options available from these outlets such as chips,

curry, kebabs, burgers, sausage rolls, pizza, Koka noodles[*] and ice lollies, etc. Indeed, this staff view was supported by the responses of the pupils themselves, as many of those who ate outside school reported their lunchtime preferences. Staff also reported that some of these outlets were tailoring special meal deals for school children, offering the young people exactly the kind of (invariably unhealthy) food they wanted at cheap prices, making it difficult for the schools to compete with them.

We have Subway, this is literally less than five minutes from this room, there is a Subway, there's a pizza shop, there's a chicken kebab shop, there's a Greggs, there are three delis, um…there's a Co-op, there are two fish 'n' chip shops so we're fighting a battle. [Respondent D1]

Well, if you walk .. It's about a 5 minute walk… They cut across there, and there's ASDA, and there's this Indian called X, so they go there. He does a lot o' wee deals, and the chip shop has deals. They do like chips, pizza, and a can o' juice for £1.50. A can o' Irn Bru or something. Juice that they want. [Respondent B2]

4.1.7   Lunchtime activities

The extra-curricular activities were being run by school staff, Glasgow Life staff and older pupils. There was a range of activities such as football, dance clubs, table football, badminton, skittle games and playing on the Nintendo Wii. Other activities on offer at the schools included playing computer games, drama club, art club, access to the library, a craft club and embroidery, as well as talks from external people on alcohol and drug-related issues. Many of these activities were solely for S1s, but in other instances they were also for older pupils. In one school, there were no formally organised activities, although on occasion members of staff would organise football games for pupils of all years. Overall, there appeared to be fewer activities on offer for S1s than had been the case during the BEI.

There was no extra funding provided for the BEI and the evaluation highlighted variability in Glasgow Life involvement from school to school in 2010-2011. In addition, changes to and cuts in staff numbers meant that some activities had ceased to run and that existing staff (already under greater pressure due to increased workload) were less willing to become involved in extra activities during the school session.

…our drop in the number of staff who are involved in lunchtime activities, and a wee bit more pressure that the rest o' them are under, so that unfortunately there is not the same willingness to get involved now for that reason. People are under a bit more pressure than they've been before. [Respondent A1]

There was a general awareness among pupils that clubs took place, but it was reported that some clubs had stopped during the school year and that other activities tended to be one-off events. Appreciation for the activities was expressed by pupils, although others indicated that they preferred to walk around school and/or sit and chat with friends rather than participate in more formal activities.

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[*] Instant noodles which contain MSG, listed on the cup as E621, along with the additives E631, E627 and Hydrolysed vegetable protein Wikipedia (2011) Koka noodles. Available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koka_noodles Last accessed on 13 September 2011

One school (that had the support of a member of staff from Glasgow Life) had been able to develop a lunchtime club for pupils. With additional external funding that had been secured, the school developed an activity club for S1s and ran a reward system, whereby those pupils that ate a healthy lunch received a slip to attend the lunchtime club and those that regularly attended the club were able to go on trips, such as going to the Scottish Parliament and the City Chambers.

This year, the Big Eat In club…particularly the community learning and development team, have found funds to organise trips out o' school around healthy eating and healthy lifestyle stuff, so that's been popular. That's perhaps…encouraged pupils to attend more; the… aspect of getting out o' school and doing something different- getting away from the normal school routine. [Respondent C1]

4.2 Perceived Impact of the stay-on-site policy

4.2.1 Overall Impact

Staff and pupils were asked what the overall impact of the stay-on-site policy had been. Most of the comments elicited were supportive of the stay-on-site initiative, with the staff respondents in particular reporting perceived benefits of the scheme, and a number indicating that they could not think of any negative issues that had arisen. The pupils' responses were a bit more mixed, although the positive views tended to outweigh the negative.

School staff respondents were able to outline a variety of ways in which the stay-on-site policy had produced benefits, particularly for the S1 pupils, as might be expected. The fact that more pupils would be staying in school and eating a healthy lunch, and not subject to the predominantly unhealthy options available outside the school, was viewed favourably. In addition, the pupils staying within the school were thought to benefit from increased safety, not having the same potential for getting into trouble and not having to experience poor weather conditions as they could shelter within the school building.

the… strongest message is always safety, because if they're here, they're safer than they are outside school, and we've had 2 children who have been knocked down this year… One was at lunchtime going out of school when she shouldn't have been out of school… I think it's a battle worth fighting because basically if pupils are here… they're not rushing around mad, they're not facing the dangers of traffic or other people outside the school. They are integrated much more into the life of the school. They make friends within the school. They're more settled going into afternoon classes. Loads and loads o' benefits that I think are, you know, are beyond dispute...
[Respondent A1]

Respondents from most of the schools added that punctuality in the afternoon had improved, there was some evidence that S1 pupils settled into school life more quickly and that discipline was possibly better too. There were also reports of staff developing better relationships with S1 pupils more quickly as they were in the school more often at lunchtime, and were interacting with staff in the canteen, running activities or within other parts of the building. Those who thought that attendance in

the canteen had increased spoke of the catering staff being able to remain in employment as a positive impact.

I do think you get to know the pupils... you come across them fairly often on a regular basis, and it might only be just a few words about how they're getting on, or what's their best subject and so on, and then challenging them to a game o' table tennis and so on, which is actually quite interesting because they now queue up to try and beat me. But it .. it puts a different dynamic on the school experience, you know? You're different from being a (Senior teacher) who's hovering over them all the time. So in that respect, I quite enjoy that,… so it does kind of break down different barriers that we normally come across in teaching. [Respondent C1]

Pupils who reported positive benefits of the stay-on-site policy shared many of the views expressed by staff respondents. They mentioned the fact that school food tended to be healthy, it was more convenient to eat within the school canteen, and a few respondents also said that the school lunches were inexpensive. The safety issue was also raised by pupils, with a number of S1 respondents acknowledging that the school environment tended to be safer than the areas surrounding the school. Pupils seemed to prefer the 'encouragement' model, and reported that it was good that they were given the choice as to whether to eat in school or not. A few pupils also liked the fact that their friends would all be in the one place, in particular, when the schools had adopted a more restrictive approach. The initiatives also seemed to be appreciated when the weather was poor.

It means that like some o' your pals .. Like if you were allowed oot, some o' your pals might go out and some o' them might stay in, and you don't know what to do, but if we're all like told to stay in, then we can all just like be in the one big group.
[Focus group B5 S1]

The good points are you get .. you know you're gonna get a lunch, and you know it's gonna be cheap, and it's healthy as well.

Yeah. But it'd be better to just encourage it and not make you stay in, coz I think more people would o' stayed in that way.

It's convenient. You just go down the stairs and there's your lunch, so...

And now you don't have to queue up for ages to get in for lunch, coz o' the rotas
[Focus group C6 S2]

As has been mentioned above, staff members from all of the schools were positive about the overall impact of the stay-on-site policy, and many indicated that it was difficult to think of any negative aspects associated with the initiatives.

I think the main positive is that we've been able to create quite a strong community feeling in first year and its something that we had no idea would happen. And that's because… we've got this very big group of kids that know each other quite well, … that see me as a focal point and actually it gelled very strongly as a clearly identifiable community with a clear set of activities they can take part in… Completely unexpected, really unexpected! ...negatives, I wouldn't say there are any, I think it's been a great success. [Respondent D1]

Those staff representatives who were able to give examples of negative issues that had arisen spoke of a lack of finance to allow new equipment and games to be purchased for the lunchtime activities programme. They considered that the increased numbers of pupils who were within the school grounds at lunchtime required increased monitoring by school staff members and that there was a lack of time to explore wider educational links to the policy.

From the negative point of view, from my perspective... it's down to finances again. We self fund the club, and we would like to have some sort of funding to help us maintain the club we have. [Respondent A2]

The pupils, though, reported a wider range of negative factors related to the initiatives. The food available within the canteen was criticised at times, for its quality, lack of variety and the fact that hot food was occasionally being served cold. The canteen environment was also said to be crowded and unwelcoming at times, and the S1 and S2 pupils complained about more senior pupils and staff members having the right to skip the queue. There were also complaints that the whole stay-on-site policy was unfair on S1 pupils, that they had been looking forward to this perceived freedom at lunchtime when they had been in primary school. A few pupils also stated that the schemes were boring, as there were not enough activities or events for pupils, or indeed time to participate in such activities.

Aye. It's freezing. It's freezing, and they don't make enough chicken burgers.

It's disgusting, the chicken burgers.

They don't heat the stuff up properly...

I think it should be proper meat and like proper stuff. No this frozen crap. Coz sometimes you find that there's quite .. It's frozen in the middle still.
[Focus group A4 S1]

As well as asking staff and pupils about their perceptions of the overall impact of the stay-on-site initiative, they were also asked to respond to specific issues, and how these had been affected, if at all, by the policy. Their responses are described in the section below. Inevitably, there was some overlap between these responses and the views expressed in relation to overall impact.

4.2.2   Perceived impact on school meal uptake

Staff and pupils gave a varied response as to whether more pupils were staying within school at lunchtime. Many staff members indicated that they did not really know what the overall impact on pupil numbers had been, although a few indicated that more secondary pupils were staying inside school and also that packed lunches appeared to be more popular. Pupils tended to say that there had not been a great impact on numbers within the school, as S1s still managed to leave the school if they wished. However, the school with the most restrictive policy seemed to have an increase in overall pupil numbers at lunchtime.

It's had a massive uptake in terms of the… number of pupils who take school meals. Certainly, two years ago, we were in the situation where certainly the staff in the canteen were worried that there would be a reduction in the number o' staff working

in it, or a possibility that in actual fact the... food that was dispensed from the .. our Fuel Zone would come from another Fuel Zone, but in actual fact that ... there's no fear of that now. I mean the canteen is .. the Fuel Zone is busy essentially all of lunchtime. There's no doubt at all. A lot of pupils purchase the meals in there.
[Respondent B1]

Respondents were also asked about the uptake of school lunches specifically, as an increase in pupil numbers at lunchtime would not necessarily equate to an increase in canteen attendance, if packed lunches became more popular. The consensus of the staff respondents was that numbers taking school lunches from the Fuel Zone, or using the new 'mobile' units or coffee areas had increased. This seemed to be especially the case in the schools operating the stay-on-site policy for the first time – there was some evidence that the schools which had been part of the Big Eat In pilot had not been able to maintain such an increase in numbers over the second year of its operation. Indeed, a few respondents from these schools questioned whether numbers taking lunches had increased in 2010-2011. However, the context may also have to be considered in these schools, as in one case a major new shopping centre had opened in close proximity to the school.

The pupils were not always aware as to the impact on pupil numbers having school lunches – this is not surprising given that the S1 pupils would have no knowledge of school lunch uptake in the 2009-2010 session. However, the S1 pupils in the most restrictive school in terms of policy thought that the uptake was very high as a result of the initiative. The S2 pupils did not have a consistent view, with arguments being put forward for an increase and a decrease in numbers, although they did tend to state that S2s were leaving the school in larger numbers in the 2010-2011 academic year.

I think mostly S1's have school lunches because if they've not got…they've not got packed lunches there's no other choice. And all the other years can go out so they've got more choices so they tend to go out rather than stay in.
[Focus group D4 S1]

Most respondents were unable to say whether there was a difference between the numbers of boys and girls attending the Fuel Zone. A few staff respondents reported that more boys stayed in and had lunches due to the lunchtime activities – these were often games such as football which were not part of the official stay-on-site initiative. One pupil group perceived that girls were likely to attend the canteen. The S1s and S2s also said that the year groups most likely to frequent the Fuel Zones were the S1s as well as S5 and S6 pupils. Indeed, the older age groups were often a source of complaint, as they were said to be able to go straight to the front of the queue.

I .. Yeah. I think with the club, more (S1) pupils are, because .. but .. but comparing to the other years – maybe like to 5th and 6th years – they .. they stay in all the time. They don't really go out as much.
[Focus group C4 S1]

4.2.3   Impact – school lunchtime activities

The interviews and focus groups suggested that external input was provided to assist lunchtime initiatives in three of the schools, with Glasgow Life and local community projects mentioned as assisting in the running of clubs. School staff were said to be helping in the same three schools, with senior pupils also providing assistance in two

schools (see also Section 4.1.7). It was difficult, though, to ascertain which clubs were specifically linked to the stay-on-site policy, and which ones would have been running regardless of these schemes.

In the Big Eat In club, there's Wii .. there's games an' all that you can play.

It's a nice place to go coz, if you're just staying in the school grounds, it could get really boring.
[Focus group C4 S1]

The views expressed by staff and pupils in relation to lunchtime activities were quite mixed. It was evident from their responses that the programme of activities in the old and new stay-on-site schools was not as extensive as would have been liked, and in one of the Big Eat In schools in particular the programme had to be reduced due to staff shortages. Also, the 'new' stay-on-site schools did not appear to have an active lunchtime activities programme. As a consequence the activities, which were one of the perceived highlights of the Big Eat In pilot, received as many criticisms as praise.

The positive comments were that activities tended to be well attended and were enjoyed by those who participated, the activities ranged from games to chill-out rooms and they gave pupils in school something to do. The negative issues were that the activities on offer could be limited, the equipment and games could be a bit lacking, and pupils added that some clubs could be too crowded and also some of the things pupils were invited to do could be a bit dull.

Last year – yes. This year, I would say 'no' because it's just been more difficult this year to put activities on than it was last year, you know?, and... with the staff who were involved in the lunchtime activities that are no longer with us, has kind of acted against that to be honest, you know? [Respondent A1]

Respondents were asked to think whether stay-on-site policies were advisable, having considered the overall impact of the specific lunchtime policy during the 2010-2011 academic year. As might be expected, the responses closely mirrored the views expressed in relation to the impact of the stay-on-site initiative as a whole (see above). As a result, there was no general consensus but staff respondents tended to make supportive statements, with pupils offering more overt criticism of such a policy.

4.3   Stay-on-site policy – barriers

Respondents considered that the main barriers to the operation of stay-on-site policies included the following: the food available within school; its cost; the school canteen environment; food outlets outside school; influence of others, and the attitudes and behaviours of pupils themselves.

The school canteen menu was described as being quite repetitive. Pupils' opinions were that there was a lack of variety and not enough food for everyone, in contrast to external outlets where pupils could buy what they wanted. However, staff believed that pupils' reluctance to try school meals centred on a misconception about the food – that it would be tasteless – and that it was not what they were used to eating at home. In addition to this, some pupils and staff suggested that school meals were not of a high quality, being cheap and unappetising. One view from staff was that the schools had got it wrong, by trying to sell "unconvincing copies" of food available

outside the school (e.g. Subway), and thus were actually hindering the stay-on-site policy.

But the truth o' the matter is the food is not really very good, and if you were… if you were asking staff or pupils to remain on site based on the food in the canteen …. it would be very few. Very few. [Respondent B1]

…and the fish doesn't even taste like anything. It's just like you're eating water or something
[Focus Group A4 S1]

It was argued by a few staff members and pupils that at about £1.15 per day the cost of school meals was perceived to be too expensive and could not compete commercially with some of the lunchtime deals local outlets offered. In schools with the Q-card system pupils were unhappy with the way it operated, for example, the machines did not take bank notes or give change. Also, pupils who forgot their Q-cards were not allowed to just recite their number to the catering staff (if they did not have a letter), they had to go to the back of the queue, with the result that some ended up going outside for lunch. There were calls for a till in the dinner hall which accepted cash.

I think they compare quite favourably I'm afraid, you know, because they get meals deals and things... that are fairly economical, and I don't know that the diner here would be able to match them. [Respondent A1]

Like coz if there is something in school which is like £1.15 for a meal, then you might be able to find the exact same thing out which is like 50p cheaper or something
[Focus Group C4 S1]

Perceived barriers relating to the canteen environment included lack of space, noise levels and queues. Pupils from schools B, C and D in particular discussed over-crowding in the canteen, the shortage of seats and being crushed by other pupils, all due to a lack of space. S1s, in particular, found the fuel zone to be too noisy; they wanted to be allowed to go to a classroom at lunchtime where they could sit and talk in relative peace.

And it's very crowded in the school...

You get crushed… by the 4th years an' that…
[Focus Group B4 S1]

Arguably the most frustrating element of the fuel zone for pupils, though, was the long queues. Pupils would go outside for lunch or bring in packed lunches just to avoid the queues; this was a substantial barrier to the success of the lunchtime policies. Pupils, frustrated with waiting in the queue would walk out the fuel zone and go without lunch. Junior pupils also found it very annoying that senior pupils and staff were allowed to bypass the queues as this extended their waiting time. By the time pupils got to the front of the queue there often was not enough time to take part in an activity (in schools that still provided lunchtime activities) nor was there any of their preferred menu choices available. S1s believed the only way to get the lunch they wanted was to leave their class early so they could get to the front of the queue. Of course, it must be acknowledged that schools did run rota systems too, or had

incentives which allowed those taking part in activities to go to the front of the queue (see Section 4.4).

…if they think the queue's too big, they go out. That's the only thing, you know? – if the queues are too big for them, they decide I'm off. I'm outta here.
[Respondent B3]

Probably coz it's very busy. I mean there's like 6 queues and there's like 500 people.

There's .. The only way you could get your lunch is wait 10 minutes before the bell, if you're staying in… And the only way you get it quick is if like you leave class early.
[Focus Group B4 S1]

The close proximity of food outlets to the school was of concern to staff; seen as a wealth of alternative places for pupils to eat instead of the canteen, all competing with each other by putting on special deals for school pupils, while new shops provided a novelty for pupils. (However, one of the schools did not have any shops or vans within a 5-10 minutes walk from the school; they felt this facilitated the school's lunchtime policy as pupils were less willing to go further afield for lunch.) Staff called for more regulation over how many fast food outlets are built in the area surrounding the school. Meanwhile, pupils appeared to be less concerned about the proximity of the food outlets, they believed that the shops actually gave them what they wanted – good food and choice – compared with what was on offer at the canteen.

And there's eight, nine, shops all within half a mile chasing after the sales of the kids
[Respondent D3]

In the schools with an encouragement policy, the decision was left in the hands of individual pupils as to what they did at lunchtime. Therefore the influence of others could be very important. However, the influence, or lack of influence, from others (e.g. staff, other pupils and parents) was considered a barrier to the stay-on-site policies in the following ways. Partly due to increased workloads, staff were less involved with the initiatives this year and as a result fewer lunchtime activities were being offered, contrary to the previous school year (2009/10) where activities were seen as key to the success of the Big Eat In. Senior staff admitted that there had not been the same level of buy-in to the initiative from staff as there was before; the momentum from the Big Eat In was felt to have been diminished to an extent.

… Some things have made it more difficult this year, and I would say, if anything, slightly less successful than it was last year, but I don't see that as a long term trend, and I don't see it that we would then turn round and say, "Well, let's not do it next year" [Respondent A1]

The view that parents need to take on more responsibility to encourage their children to have school meals was expressed by staff. This was particularly the case in relation to the amount of money parents gave their children for lunch; staff felt that this was counterproductive to the school's stay-on-site policy. When discussing pupils entitled to a free school meal, one opinion was that if parents did not give their children money every week to spend, the pupils would be quite happy to use that free school meal.

I mean the amount o'kids that maybe get a free meal, and they're not using it… I think the parents have to take on a wee bit more responsibility. [Respondent A3]

Peer pressure as a barrier to school meals was talked about in a number of ways. It was claimed that pupils went out for lunch in order to avoid being bullied for staying in school at lunchtime, although it was also acknowledged that pupils wanted to go outside because that was what their friends were doing. Peer pressure was also seen as something that could also be a facilitator to having schools meals; depending on what friends were doing at lunchtime it could make pupils more or less likely to have a school meal.

She wanted to come in, but two o' her pals wanted to go out, so she went out. There was something particular that was on the menu she really wanted to come in for, but if they're overruled by their pals then that's where they'll go.
[Respondent C3]

Because if your pals an' that go out for lunch, like obviously you're no being peer-pressured are you, but like if your pals are going out, obviously you'll go out with, you know?

Coz you don't want to be left in yourself.
[Focus Group B4 S1]

The pupils who did leave the school at lunchtime were also considered to have made it more difficult for the stay-on-site policy to work. Even with primary schools and secondary schools trying to discourage the idea, pupils saw going out at lunchtime in secondary school as a rite of passage and part of growing up. Amongst staff, there was a view that not being allowed out at lunchtime was seen by pupils as a challenge to overcome. However, S2 pupils who had stayed in school during their first year, stated that it was now their turn to go outside for lunch.

Cos when you go out, you can dae what you want. You've no got everyone… somebody watching you all the time, coz like in here there's always cameras out there…

…coz like last year you had to stay in, so like this year you just want to go oot.
[Focus Group A6 S2]

4.4   Stay-on-site policy – facilitators

Two main types of facilitators were identified: the existing facilitating factors already operating within schools; and issues which were proposed as having the potential to assist the stay-on-site policies. As might be expected, there was overlap between the perceived barriers and facilitators, often with respondents having diametrically opposed views, for example, in relation to the quality of school food. The main facilitators cited by staff were the food available within school, its cost, incentives and activities, the influence of others, the dinner hall environment, the promotion of the policy and the current policy itself. Pupils tended to report three main types of facilitator only: the food available within school; its cost; and lunchtime activities/incentives.

Canteen food was talked about in terms of choice and quality. Contrary to pupils' opinions cited in Section 4.4, staff complimented the wide variety of meals available.

Catering staff considered the food to be good quality, while pupils stated that the food was healthy and/or healthier than alternatives available outside the school.

Obviously the variety of meals that's on offer, and things that pupils want to eat at lunchtime. I mean we do do burgers downstairs and, so rather than go to all the local shops that are within 5 minutes walk of here, it's .. we need to give them stuff that they would go out and buy, and make it as good as they would buy outside
[Respondent C1]

It's healthy and it's good value for money as well...

I just think it's like more healthier than going oot an' all that.
[Focus Group C4 S1]

Respondents discussed various issues related to cost. One view expressed was that the relatively low cost of food in the canteen encouraged pupils to eat their lunch there. It was also argued that the choice depended upon how much money a pupil had to spend on a particular day, and if this amount was low the pupil would either eat in the Fuel Zone or from a local shop that was offering a special deal. The group discussions confirmed that the low cost of food in the school canteen did make it an attractive proposition for some pupils.

And you get more for your money here (the canteen)..
.
If we're low on money then we'll go to Greggs and get something cheaper…

...or stay in.

...and if we've got more money we'll go to Subway. Yeah. Or we won't go out.
[Focus Group C6 S2]

The good points are that the Fuel Zone is healthier, it's quite cheap to go buy lunch from there
[Focus Group D5 S1]

Rewards and incentives were given to pupils as positive reinforcement; pupils were rewarded for staying in school at lunchtime. Rewards included prizes or trips (e.g. to the Science Centre, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the City Chambers) for those who had school meals regularly. Incentives included lunchtime activities (e.g. music and movie-making clubs) and ways to avoid queues (e.g. pupils were given a pass that allowed them to get their lunch more quickly if they were attending an activity). Staff spoke of factors that had benefited the activities that had operated at lunchtime. These included funding received from Glasgow Life which had allowed schools to buy equipment for activities which was still in active use, and the positive relationship between schools and those running activities from Glasgow Life or from the local community.

You get fruit and... you get points as well if you get fruit and stuff, so you're sort of encouraged.
[Focus Group C6 S2]

The influence of others, either external (parents) or internal (peers; senior pupils; staff) to the school were considered by staff respondents to assist the stay-on-site policy. Interestingly, pupils tended to talk about the influence of others as being a barrier to staying in school at lunchtime, and not an encouragement to stay and have lunch in the school canteen. Staff acknowledged the importance of getting parents on board early on as they had the potential to play a key role in what their children do at lunchtime. For example, parents could influence their children to have school meals by actively encouraging them to stay in, but also through the amount of money they provided for lunch. Staff also thought that an emphasis on the safety benefits of staying in school at lunchtime was a good way to garner parental support. It was also said that pupils generally want to do the same as their friends at lunchtime. Therefore if, as staff suggested, this was channelled positively and pupils encouraged their friends to stay in school with them at lunchtime, the number of pupils in school at lunchtime would increase.

It's a good thing to get parents on site from the start; let them know what's happening, what you're trying to do, why you're trying to do it, and ask for their support. [Respondent C1]

If some are doing it, more will be doing it… A groundswell of pupils being involved will definitely impinge on others because of peer pressure [Respondent A1]

Another way in which pupils were encouraged to stay in school was having senior pupils act as positive role models. For example, the buddy system operating in one of the schools involved senior pupils encouraging S1s to have school meals, involving them in activities, and in general being a positive influence. Despite it being said that there were fewer staff members able or willing to be involved in stay-on-site policy, there were still ways in which staff aided the initiative – by being accessible, communicating with the pupils and on occasion getting involved in activities. This included encouraging pupils to stay in at lunchtime, bringing pupils who shouldn't be out at lunchtime back to school, and giving up some of their time to run lunchtime activities.

I think the school's got a relatively good atmosphere, and there's... there's quite a good rapport, for the most part, between most o' the teachers, most o' the kids, most o' the time [Respondent B1]

Catering staff praised changes that had been made to the dinner hall environment in one school in particular. A coffee shop complete with bar stools and a distinctive look was operating in the middle of the fuel zone which had so far proved popular among the students. The other initiative was a 'mobile unit'; this was heavily promoted throughout the school and served different food to what was on offer within the fuel zone, thus offering students another alternative to the fuel zone other than going outside for lunch. It was hoped that these new developments would change pupils' perceptions of what eating in school was like. For example, not all food had to be bought and eaten in the fuel zone – it was possible to go with friends to the coffee shop and buy a hot chocolate. Although both these ideas were in their early stages at the time interviewing took place, initial feedback suggested they were well-received.

It's out of the diner. So it's in the social area, and it's so the children'll maybe see this as they're heading towards the door, and maybe think twice. And it looks trendy, and it's different food to what they would get in the diner. [Respondent A3]

Various methods were utilised in order to promote the stay-on-site policy to pupils and parents, such as the parent newsletter, assemblies and staff encouraging pupils on a one to one basis.

> *…and we do encourage them: 'Remember the Big Eat In'?. You can come here, and we tell them there's classes on, you know? Go and see what activities are on today.*
> [Respondent A3]

However, it was also argued that the policy was only working in one school in particular due to the enforcement model that was in operation.

> *the kids have accepted it, so that .. so that I think that's essentially why it works.*
> [Respondent B1]

Pupils had more to say when it came to discussions about what could make it easier for the lunchtime policy to run. Staff also gave additional ideas as to what potential facilitators might be in the future. Ideas generated included improvements to the food on offer. Pupils wanted more variety than what was currently being offered, although often this seemed to mean allowing unhealthy options back on the menu. For example, pupils wanted the option to have sugary and 'junk' food, and to be able to add some salt to their food.

> *If they'd sell chocolate!*
> [Focus Group B5 S1]

Staff discussed the importance of parental support of school meals. They believed that they needed better communication with parents about what the schools were trying to do, and to increase parents' knowledge about what food is sold in school. That way parents would be better equipped to back up the message from the school about eating lunch in the fuel zone, especially with regard to pupils entitled to a free school meal. Hosting taster sessions for parents was suggested as a way in which parents could sample the food on offer; something that has been attempted in other schools previously.

> *…it's trying to get over these preconceived ideas about school lunch is no very good*
> [Respondent C1]

One school in particular advocated involving pupils more. One way of doing this was by actively taking on board pupils' ideas and opinions about what food should be served in the fuel zone, and to have the pupils come up with their own healthy menus. In fact, although not part of the stay-on-site initiative, one school as part of a hospitality project had asked a number of pupils to devise their own menu from scratch. They then had to make the food, advertise it and serve it to the rest of the school.

> *I don't know that it's specifically to do wi' the Big Eat In, but it's involving the children, and they're getting them into the kitchen, and it does create interest.* [Respondent A3]

As has been mentioned above, the activities no longer appeared to be as important an element of the schools' initiatives. Most of the discussion around activities centred on the type of activities pupils would like to have access to, such as art, music, sport, a social area, somewhere to pay board games, or a club (like last year). Some of these were available in schools, but it was clear that a lack of funding and staff

shortages had resulted in a greatly diminished programme. Both S1 and S2 pupils indicated that they would be more likely to stay in school if they had access to a few of the activities outlined above.

I think if they had like really good clubs, then a lot more people would stay in.
[Focus Group C6 S2]

4.5 Future of the stay-on-site policy

4.5.1 Modifications to stay-on-site policy

Both staff and pupils were asked what modifications they would make to the operation of the Big Eat In or the stay-on-site policy in the schools. As would be expected, many of the suggestions given echoed previous views expressed.

Secondary 1 pupils in the schools with the 'new' stay-on-site lunchtime policy were especially liable to argue that they should be allowed to leave the school, and that the policy was unfair. They also suggested that if they were to be restricted at lunchtime they should be allowed out on a partial basis, either on a few days per week or after the first term.

Aye. To let you oot.

Yeah. That's what I would change...

Like maybe they should let you have your lunch like somewhere else, where we want to eat it, without giving you a hard time or that.

See even if we werenae allowed oot like the full week, I think they should maybe let us oot two days a week or something. .
[Focus Group B5 S1]

Related to this, there was no consensus reached as to whether an encouragement model or enforcement model should be adopted in schools. There was some evidence to suggest that staff in the schools with the new policy, and School B in particular, not only promoted a more restrictive approach, but also favoured the enforcement model. The encouragement model was still favoured by respondents from the Big Eat In schools, as was the case in the evaluation of the pilot project.

Encouragement... it didn't seem to work... I think we all tried to encourage them, and we even tried encouraging them to come in, "Come on. Come in. Use up your lunch money",… and trying my best to get them to come in, but – no. Just not working. I think definitely the enforcement was better. [Respondent B3]

There was no consensus amongst staff respondents as to which school years the lunchtime restriction should apply to. There was some support within schools to extend the policy to cover S2 pupils as well as S1s, and a few respondents argued that the ideal would be for S1 to S4 pupils to stay within school, and then when pupils were aged 16 years or over they should be allowed to make their own choices.

I think the whole school should be kept in, but never mind. I don't see that happening, but the 1st and 2nd years definitely. I think for their own safety. Being a mother myself, I appreciate that. I think they're safer. [Respondent B3]

It was acknowledged that the canteen may struggle with an increase of pupil numbers if the lunchtime restrictions were extended and that, for example, staggered lunchtimes would be necessary. Also, S5 and S6 pupils were thought to be regular attenders of the Fuel Zone, which would add to the general pressure of numbers. However, other staff members argued that the S1 year group was the ideal age to target, that it had many benefits including safety and helping with transition, and that there would be little benefit in extending the policy to other year groups. The pupils were generally unsupportive of extending the policy to cover years other than S1. Those that did propose this tended to be S1 pupils who perceived that the initiative was grossly unfair and wanted older pupils to experience this unfairness too.

I would like to see it move into second year, I think its been really good,… the less our students are seen on the street and sometimes the local community that's what they see, they see… it still can be 700 kids pouring out of the door and pouring into these shops and then pouring back. And I think if we could extend it, it would be good for the students and it would be very good for the school… I think we'd have to rethink the dining room. [Respondent D1]

They should stop every single other year group…

Aha. If they're stopping us, stop them.
[Focus Group A4 S1]

There were a number of other particular modifications that were called for. Examples include:

- Increased funding for the initiatives, both to cover school lunches and to enable more activities to take place. Pupils also asked to be allowed access to other areas of the school at lunchtime, including computer rooms and libraries. As has been mentioned, the impact of the activities appeared to have decreased since the pilot evaluation.
- More support from parents. Respondents acknowledged that many parents were already supportive of the initiative, but this was clearly not consistent. Ideas about promoting the initiative more widely, and also increasing parental involvement were expressed. For example, it was suggested that parents could be employed as volunteers to assist with the delivery of aspects of the lunchtime policy.

I think parental support always makes anything more likely, you know? It's not always easy to get that support, and some parents are not maybe that willing to get involved, or maybe not that able to get involved.., so it's a difficult thing to secure...
Part of it was that we did letter parents to highlight lunchtime activities, and to highlight the lunchtime initiative, so we do consult and involve parents as much as possible in any positive development because that kind of support is absolutely vital to try and drive anything forward [Respondent A1]

- The extension of a community litter pick-up scheme. This was viewed as being very successful, and had a positive impact on the school's links with the community around the school.
- An analysis of the foods being eaten by pupils outside of the school, in order that the canteen could then provide similar items in a more nutritious way. It

was also argued, though, that pupils would not like 'cheap copies' of food available from fast food outlets.

Funding, and… find out what they are going over to X and what they are buying, and if they are buying… snackpots and these kind of things, then I think maybe what we should do is go down the road of trying to introduce these into the salad bar, where… if they want to have cold pasta salad, then that's absolutely fine, as long as we make sure it's reduced fat in every way. [Respondent A2]

Let's say for example the Subway sandwich becomes the latest fashion. The Fuel Zone concept tries to copy it. It's a cheap copy. Noodles become the in thing – Fuel Zone try to copy it. It's a cheap,... it's not a decent copy. The kids aren't convinced by it, so... They have to accept that they can't do that sort o' thing, and they'd maybe be better trying to do basics better [Respondent B1]

- Reduction of the price for juice in the vending machines
- Changes to the canteen environment, such as TV screens showing programmes and films.

4.5.2   Continuation of stay-on-site policy

Staff respondents were mostly very supportive of the continuation of the policy. As has been noted previously, the impact was viewed as being positive on the whole. The healthy eating agenda, the increased safety of S1 pupils at a time of transition and the development of better links between S1s as well as between S1s and staff members were all cited as reasons why the policy was working and should continue.

Because I think it's been a great success, I think it has improved the lifestyle of our young people and certainly delayed that rush into chips and pizza for a year,…I think it's improved the way the school presents itself to the community,… and I think is was what parents want. Out of that our (S1) numbers have gone up by 10% …
[Respondent D1]

Pupils' views were more varied, although some group participants from Schools A, C and D all stated that the initiative should carry on in the future. However, the S1 pupils in School B and the S2 pupils in School C were the most negative in terms of continuing with such a lunchtime policy. These respondents argued that the whole policy was unfair, it impinged on their personal freedom and the S1 pupil respondents in particular said that it would be more enjoyable if they were to be allowed out of the school at lunchtime.

Yeah I think it should continue to run.

Because in S1 you don't really know what the rules of the school are and it takes quite a lot of time to get used to them. So then that's why you should…S1 should stay in a bit.
[Focus Group D4 S1]

Aye. It should be your choice…

There's never enough food, so ..: There's never enough food because like if you want something and then like you go to get it, there's nothing there, an' then you're pure stuck wi' like a roll or something ..

It's like a pure rush to get ….a roll and cheese.

Aye. I know ye get pure run doon!
[Focus Group C7 S2]

4.5.3 Roll-out of stay-on-site policy

There was broad support for the stay-on-site policies being extended to other secondary schools in Glasgow, and beyond. The staff members of all types, representing senior staff, catering staff and those involved in running activities stated that all of the benefits mentioned in the sections above outweighed the drawbacks and difficulties.

Yes. I think it's worthwhile having it. It does help their diet. I've complained a lot about the food, but I think it does help their diet. It encourages some pupils to bring packed lunches which I think is no bad thing, and, as I say, in terms of behaviour... We've got limited evidence about overall behaviour. The contribution of pupils being in and ready to start at the very end of lunchtime together, it's a definite positive.
[Respondent B1]

As might be expected, the pupils from School B were the most opposed to extending the stay-on-site policy to other schools. As they were so critical of the current initiative, they could not see any merit in such an approach being adopted elsewhere. A few other pupils were unsure as to the wisdom of extending the policy.

I think they should roll oot like you're allowed oot at lunch.

It's no fair like if we're annoyed wi' it, then if we get other schools kept in then it would just get more schools annoyed wi' it, like staying it at lunchtime an' that.

Aye. Like more problems, like because say like they're annoyed or something... coz you're kept in, you might dae something like wrong; like just get annoyed and like start kicking the balls off people an' that. And you might get into trouble for it…
[Focus Group B4 S1]

5   DISCUSSION

The general consensus of the school staff who took part in the evaluation was that the stay-on-site policies were successful and therefore should continue in the future. Staff stated that the main perceived benefits of the policy – the increased safety of the S1 pupils, the promotion of a healthy eating agenda, pupils settling into school life more quickly, and interacting better with school staff – outweighed the drawbacks and difficulties that were also cited. Pupils' views were more varied, though, with pupils from Schools A, C and D tending to say that the stay-on-site policy should continue, whereas S1 pupils in School B and S2 pupils in School C were much more negative about the prospect of the stay-on-site policy continuing. This latter group argued that the policy was unfair and that it impinged on pupils' personal freedom. On the whole there was a lot of support for the stay-on-site policies to be rolled out to other schools in Glasgow, although as might be expected, pupils from School B were the least supportive of such a policy being adopted elsewhere.

Respondents from the Big Eat In schools favoured the encouragement model, as was the case in the pilot project. The Big Eat In schools adopted an ethos of encouragement and education with regard to pupils staying in school at lunchtime. They educated the pupils about the benefits of staying in, highlighting the safety element and the healthy food available in the school canteen and encouraged S1 pupils by providing activities and clubs for them at lunchtime. However the focus of the initiative had changed slightly compared to the previous academic year (2009-2010), with the activities programme being more limited, and as such more prominence being given to healthy eating and pupil safety.

The schools which had recently adopted a stay-on-site policy did so for a number of reasons; a concern over the quality of the food pupils were purchasing and consuming from outlets outside school, an attempt to improve pupil safety and an aim to increase pupil numbers eating in the school. Staff in the schools with the new stay-on-site policy, and School B in particular, not only promoted a more restrictive approach, but also favoured an enforcement-based model.

There were differences noted between the approaches adopted by the four schools. In the Big Eat In schools, there were examples of pupils staying in and taking part in the activities on offer. However, there were also S1 pupils who ate predominantly outside the school – the Big Eat In was clearly not impacting on all of the pupils in the relevant age group. In the new stay-on-site schools a stricter enforcement model appeared to deter pupils from leaving school at lunchtime. It seems that the consequences of leaving school at lunchtime may not have a longer term impact on pupil behaviour; there were pupils who indicated that they would have gone out of school at lunchtime if it were not for the strict enforcement of the policy. However, these pupils tended to be quite negative about the policy, and thought that they would leave school at lunchtime as soon as the policy became more lax.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, pupils expressed a preference towards an encouragement model as opposed to an enforcement policy. They wanted the freedom to choose what they did at lunchtime, whether that involved leaving the school grounds or not. Indeed, in each school there were a group of pupils that stayed in at lunchtime regardless of any ban (if in place) or activities being run as they enjoyed sitting, chatting and relaxing with friends at lunchtime. In schools with a stricter regime, there was resistance to the stay on site policy. S2 pupils who had previously been 'forced'

to stay in school when in S1 suggested that such a strong policy could be counterproductive and that a ban on going out only made pupils more determined to leave the school grounds at lunchtime. When discussing their own practice, S2 pupils who had stayed in school during their first year, argued that they had now earned the opportunity to be allowed out of the school during lunchtime. Staff respondents recounted that as the academic year went on it became increasingly difficult to keep S1 pupils in the school at lunchtime, and that they believed as S1s settled into school life that the lunchtime restriction was seen by them as a challenge to overcome.

In the school with the most restrictive lunchtime policy S1 pupils thought that the uptake of school lunches was very high as a result of the initiative. The S2 pupils in the Big Eat In schools did not have a consistent view about the uptake of school lunches, with arguments being put forward for an increase and a decrease in numbers, although they did believe that S2s were leaving the school in larger numbers in the 2010-2011 academic year. If this is indeed true, it implies that their involvement in the Big Eat In as S1 pupils during the previous school year did not translate to increased S2 pupil numbers in the canteen in the following school session, as might have been hoped.

Staff called for more regulation in relation to the number of fast food outlets established nearby schools. While vans were still present outside some of the schools it was the close proximity of the food outlets in the surrounding area that was of greatest concern to staff. The one school that did not have any shops or vans within a 5-10 minute walk from the school felt this facilitated their lunchtime policy as pupils were less willing to go further afield for lunch. All the other schools had shops and/or vans within a 5 minute walk from the schools gates. The perception of staff (which was supported by pupils' own accounts) was that pupils tended to buy the more unhealthy options available from these outlets such as sausage rolls, chips, curry, kebabs, burgers and Koka noodles.

It was also reported that many of these outlets were tailoring special meal deals for school children, offering exactly the kind of (invariably unhealthy) food the pupils wanted at cheap prices, often with a large portion size, making it difficult for schools to compete commercially. Despite this, the relatively low cost of food in the canteen was attractive to some pupils and encouraged them to eat their lunch there. However, the low cost of schools meals did not convince all pupils – it was also reported that the choice of where to eat depended upon how much money a pupil had to spend on a particular day, and if this amount was low the pupil would either eat in the Fuel Zone or from a local shop that was offering a special deal.

Staff believed parents also had an important role, for example, in relation to the amount of money they gave their children for lunch. At present it was felt that if the parents provided too much money then this would mitigate against the school's stay on site policy. Therefore, it was thought to be vital to get parents on board early, to agree with the policy or at least not to undermine it, as they have the potential to play a key role in their children's lunchtime behaviour. However, staff acknowledged that better communication with parents about the school's policy, in order to increase parents' knowledge about the nature and quality of food sold in school, was needed. Of course, the problematic nature of engaging with parents and carers, and involving them in the work of school, has been highlighted in previous research conducted by ScotCen for GCPH.

The lunchtime activities were undoubtedly one of the major successes of the 'Big Eat In' pilot. However there was concern over the sustainability of these, in part due to

the reliance on the goodwill of staff and other volunteers to run the majority of activities, as well as a lack of funding. Senior staff admitted that there had not been the same level of buy-in to the initiative from staff as there had been previously; as a result the momentum from the Big Eat In was felt to have been lost to an extent. In 2010-2011 there appeared to be fewer activities on offer to S1s than had been the case when the Big Eat In pilot was evaluated. The 'new' schools with the stay-on-site policies did not appear to have an 'active' lunchtime activities programme. Schools that reported receiving no extra funding or help from external organisations said that this limited the range of activities on offer in 2010-2011.

In addition, changes to and cuts in staff numbers meant that some activities had ceased to run and that existing staff (already under greater pressure due to increased workloads) were less willing to become involved in the extra-curricular activities during the school session. With fewer overt incentives for pupils to have a school meal it is possible that this had an impact on the number of pupils remaining in the school at lunchtime. However, staff in one school spoke of factors that had assisted the activities that had operated at lunchtime. These included funding received from Glasgow Life which had allowed the school to buy equipment for activities which was still in active use, and the positive relationship between the schools and those running activities from Glasgow Life or from the local community. Links with external organisations, both in terms of funding and the provision of individuals to run sessions, appear to be key to the sustainability of lunchtime activities.

There was no clear consensus as to the standard of food available in the school canteen. The food on offer in the canteen, while praised by some for its quality and provision of a number of options for a healthy lunch, was also reported to be cheap, unappetising and lacking in variety. One school in particular advocated involving pupils more in the design of menus; they suggested actively taking on board pupils' ideas and opinions about what food should be served in the canteen, and to have pupils prepare dishes on occasion.

Barriers relating to the canteen environment included lack of space, noise levels and queues. Pupils from Schools B, C and D in particular discussed over-crowding in the canteen, the shortage of seats and being crushed by other pupils. One of the most frustrating elements of the Fuel Zone for pupils was the long queues. Pupils said that they would go outside for lunch or bring in packed lunches just to avoid the queues; this would appear to be a major barrier to the success of the lunchtime policies, although it is important to acknowledge that often outlets outside of school are subject to long queues too. Since the physical environment is known to be an important factor in relation to the practical implementation of stay-on-site policies, attempts by schools to improve this are essential. Changes made to the canteen environment in one school in particular were praised; these included a coffee shop and a 'mobile unit' which offered students another alternative to the Fuel Zone other than going outside for lunch, both of which had proved popular among school pupils. These new initiatives aimed to change the environment and perhaps most importantly pupils' perceptions of the school lunchtime experience.

It was discussed that pupils generally want to do the same as their friends at lunchtime (this was a popular reason for pupils going outside for lunch). However if, as staff suggested, this was channelled positively and pupils encouraged their friends to stay in school with them, the numbers in school at lunchtime would increase. With this in mind some schools operated a buddy system whereby S1s had a senior pupil who looked after them and helped them settle in. This included having lunch in

school and taking part in the activities. Other incentives included ways to avoid queues (e.g. pupils were given a pass that allowed them to get their lunch more quickly if they were attending an activity), and offers of trips to the Science Centre, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the City Chambers for those eating in the canteen.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The stay-on-site lunchtime policies were reported to be a success by school staff and were seen to offer multiple benefits such as increasing the safety of pupils, larger numbers of pupils eating a healthy lunch, better relations within the school between staff and pupils and pupils settling in more quickly to secondary school. Amongst staff, there was a lot of support for the stay-on-site policy to be continued at their school, and for the stay-on-site policy to be rolled out to more widely to other secondary schools in Glasgow. The views amongst pupils were mixed, with some supporting the continuation of the stay-on-site policy and others objecting to what was perceived to be an infringement of pupils' rights.

It is difficult to draw any firm conclusion as to the most successful stay-on-site model. If it is to be measured solely in terms of the numbers of S1 pupils staying in, then the strictly enforced model (with consequences for leaving the school at lunchtime) appears to be the most successful. However, if success is also measured in terms of instilling a greater awareness and willingness to adopt a healthy diet and lifestyle amongst pupils, it may not be the most successful model to adopt. It appears that those pupils who felt 'forced' to stay in, were more dissatisfied and arguably more inclined to go outside at lunchtime in future years.

The encouragement model, in tandem with the provision of activities, was more popular and did encourage some pupils to stay in, other pupils were voting with their feet and leaving school at lunchtime. This may indicate that more work should be done to prepare young people's expectations of what is expected and/or allowed at secondary school. It could be argued that if stay-on-site policies were to become the norm and more established across a greater number of schools, younger secondary school pupils may in turn become more accepting of the policy. The tracking of school meal uptake by the different school years may well answer which model is the most successful in the longer term.

Whilst in this project, there was generally less concern expressed amongst staff about vans near the schools, presumably due to stricter controls on these vendors, staff expressed concerns about the numerous food outlets within the vicinity of the schools. It was thought that pupils were generally buying rather unhealthy, junk food and that many of these outlets were offering special meal deals to pupils making it hard for the school canteen to compete with. Current research, commissioned by GCPH, to investigate in more detail the type of food pupils are buying at lunchtime and, in particular, to conduct a nutritional analysis of these foods, is timely. This research may provide more concrete evidence in relation to the theory that the food available from these outlets is very unhealthy and contains high levels of salt, fat and calories. Highlighting the nutritional content of these foods may be an effective way of winning over the hearts and minds of key stakeholders, including parents and carers and possibly even some of the pupils themselves.

The lunchtime activities were one of the major successes of the Big Eat In in 2009-2010. However, at the time, concerns were expressed over the sustainability of these because the activities were mostly dependent on the goodwill of staff and volunteers to run them. Indeed, in 2010-2011 there appeared to be fewer activities on offer due to decreased staff members and greater pressure on existing staff who, in turn, were less willing (and indeed less able) to run activities. In contrast to the pilot, some of the

schools received no extra funding and thus felt that they were limited in the number and type of activities they could offer. In the school that had managed to receive extra funding and input from Glasgow Life, there appeared to be a flourishing lunchtime club in operation. External assistance and funding seem therefore to be key to the sustainability of lunchtime activities. Also, stay-on-site policies could be seriously undermined if lunchtime activities are not active parts of the programme. Arguably, the less favourable reception to stay-on-site policies elicited from pupils in this project compared with the pilot is strongly related to the complete lack (or decrease in the number) of lunchtime activities available to S1 pupils.

It should also be recognised that schools have made considerable efforts to cater to the pupils' tastes both in terms of the food on offer, the dining environment and the activities in place. New mobile units and a coffee-style bar in one school were very well-received in this research, and would seem worth promoting in other schools, if funding permits.

In conclusion, the stay-on-site policies were perceived as being successful, with the benefits conferred by the initiatives outweighing any drawbacks. The Scottish Government's "Route Map Towards Healthy Weight" has called for policy responses that go beyond individual initiatives, to those that require systemic and far-reaching change in infrastructure, environments, culture and social norms.[18] These initiatives offer a very promising way forward for policy makers and practitioners to develop further approaches to school-based promotion of healthy eating in partnership with children, young people and their parents/carers. However, if these initiatives are to continue, care must be taken that important elements, such as lunchtime activities, continue to be supported. If these initiatives were to operate in tandem with progressive urban planning policy that is able to encourage the establishment of healthy rather than unhealthy food retail outlets, as well as educate the suppliers and traders of food, the chances of success would be all the greater.

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