

# **Nottinghamshire Childhood Obesity Trailblazer**

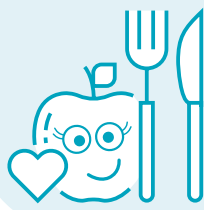
**...giving children the best start**



**Early Years Settings survey report**  
April 2020-May 2020



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**



## National Context

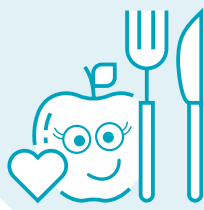
The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer programme is a three year programme funded by Department of Health and Social care (DHSC) in response to the ambitions set out in the second chapter **Childhood Obesity: Plan for Action**.

The programme is being delivered in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) with support from Public Health England (PHE).

The trailblazer programme aims to promote innovative action to tackle childhood obesity and associated health inequalities and generate useful learning on 'what works' in different communities.

### **Specifically the objectives of the programme are:**

- Test the limits of existing local authority powers through innovative and determined action to address the drivers of childhood obesity at a local level
- Generate and share learning and best practice to encourage wider local action; and
- Develop solutions to local obstacles and consider further actions government can take to enhance local powers, enable ambitious local action and achieve changes at scale.



## Nottinghamshire Context

**The purpose of the Nottinghamshire Childhood Obesity Trailblazer is to:**

**“Improve the home and community Food Environment of families with children in the early years living in areas of higher childhood obesity prevalence.”**

The focus of the Nottinghamshire project is on how the local system can positively influence, enable, and support change within the home and community food environment for families with children in the early years. Our initial Trailblazer work will be focussed on areas of Nottinghamshire with the highest levels of childhood obesity (in Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Ashfield and Newark/Sherwood Districts). It is very much a cross council and partnership approach bringing together skills and expertise from Public Health, Early Years and School Catering with Children’s Centre Services, Childcare and Early Years Providers, together with local parents.

**This Aim will be achieved through the following objectives:**

### **Making access to affordable healthy food for families easier**

Focus groups with parents in four areas told us that time pressures due to parental and employment responsibilities and the ability to find healthy recipes can be challenging. Some families did not feel that healthy food was affordable. Time, cost, access, preparation skills were all barriers families experienced to eating healthier meals.

### **Improving quality of food provision through early years settings**

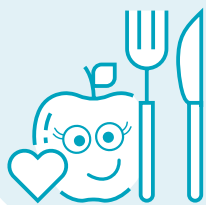
Local childcare and nursery providers told us that they work hard to provide healthy meals and snacks to the children they look after, and they are keen to be able to provide information and advise parents and carers on healthy eating.

### **Enabling parents to develop good eating habits with their children**

Evidence tells us that parental feeding styles and practices can have an impact on children’s eating behaviours.

### **Promoting consistent messages on healthy food for pre– school children**

We want to ensure key messages on healthy food are gained from reliable and evidenced based sources.



## Nottinghamshire Context

As Part of our objectives to **“Improve quality of food provision through Early Years settings”** and **“promote consistent messages on healthier food for pre-school children”** it is vital that we consult with the Early Years sector to gauge a baseline to the level of knowledge, skills and capacity within the early years sector at the beginning of the project. A working group was established with support from the national evaluation support partner ICF to work on a range of questions to help Public Health gain a better understanding of the opportunities available to help improve the quality of food provision through early years settings and promote consistent messages.

This questionnaire was initially drafted in September 2019 in line with the test and learn ethos of the Trailblazer programme and was prototyped within a number of different forums before a final version was signed off.

This final version was sent out through Early Years and Childhood services within Nottinghamshire County Council to all settings within Nottinghamshire throughout April and May 2020 during a very challenging time due to the impact of Covid –19 Pandemic.

## Response

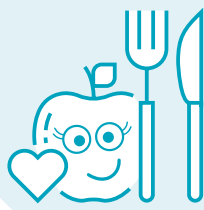
Providers were asked to submit contact details on a voluntary basis if they were interested in continuing the collaborative approach throughout the remainder of the project and these contacts will be utilised within the various workstreams throughout year 2 and year 3 of the project.

The key learning points and future workstreams/action points are detailed at the end of the document.



In total  
**272**  
completed responses

were received which represents **22%** of all providers within Nottinghamshire.



## Executive Summary/Key Learning Points

### Response

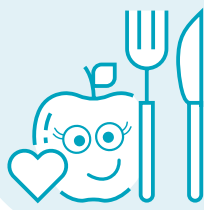
- The survey was sent out to all Early Years providers in Nottinghamshire throughout April and May 2020
- A **Good** response rate (22%) from settings particularly in light of covid 19 pandemic and subsequent national lockdown
- **Just Over Half** of those surveys completed were by childminders
- **Gedling** and **Rushcliffe** had the highest response rate in the County.

### Food provision

- Around **Two Thirds** (67%) of settings who responded to the survey prepare and cook meals from scratch with onsite kitchen
- **Some** settings provide a funded meal for 2 year funded children
- Around **Two Thirds** have requested guidance on healthy pack lunches
- **Over Half** of all settings wanted guidance on food allergens to give to parents
- A **Large Majority** of settings do not invite families/carers into the setting to eat with the children but some expressed an interest in doing this more often
- The **Large Majority** (83%) of settings had a healthy food and drink policy in place but the ways in which this is communicated with parents varies across the county
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that settings faced some barriers engaging parents in food provision and getting them on board with key messages including healthy pack lunches.

### Confidence Levels

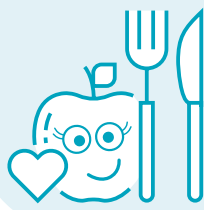
- The majority of settings rated themselves as having a **High Level** of confidence in relation to providing healthy meals in their setting
- A **small number** of settings rated themselves as less confident
- **Two Thirds** of settings would like training to be delivered via e learning with nearly a **Third** wanting online video tips
- **Half** of settings stated that training on fussy feeding would make them feel more confident
- Just **Over a Quarter** of settings (27%) would be interested in a Healthy Eating Award scheme specifically for the Early Years
- A **Large Majority** expressed interest in being part of a community of practice.



## Executive Summary/Key Learning Points

### Current Standards and Challenges/Barriers

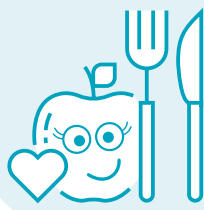
- Just **over half** (59%) felt there were no barriers within their setting to cooking healthier meals, The biggest barrier was capacity and time to prepare and cook
- Overall the survey suggests respondents were **very positive** about the quality of the meals they produce with most talking about buying fresh ingredients and cooking meals from scratch
- Where there were concerns expressed they were about unhealthy food & drink being brought into settings by parents
- Overall the knowledge of best practice for early years nutrition appears to be **good**. However some settings would like more support around portion sizes for the various age groups
- Overall the reported standards of basic food hygiene was **high**, with most who were directly involved in the preparation and serving of food trained to a minimum level 2 food hygiene standard
- Childcare providers reported having **high** standards of practice in regards allergens and special dietary requirements
- A **small number** of settings (15) stated that they would be interested in exploring an option to purchase hot food offer from Notts county council school meals service for children
- Anecdotally it appears that schools seem to get free fruit and veg delivered as snacks for EYFS children and this is not available to private providers
- Anecdotally the feedback suggests that childminders have the desire to provide the very best freshly cooked meals for their children but **Time and Cost** seems to be the biggest barrier to this.



## Executive Summary/Key Learning Points

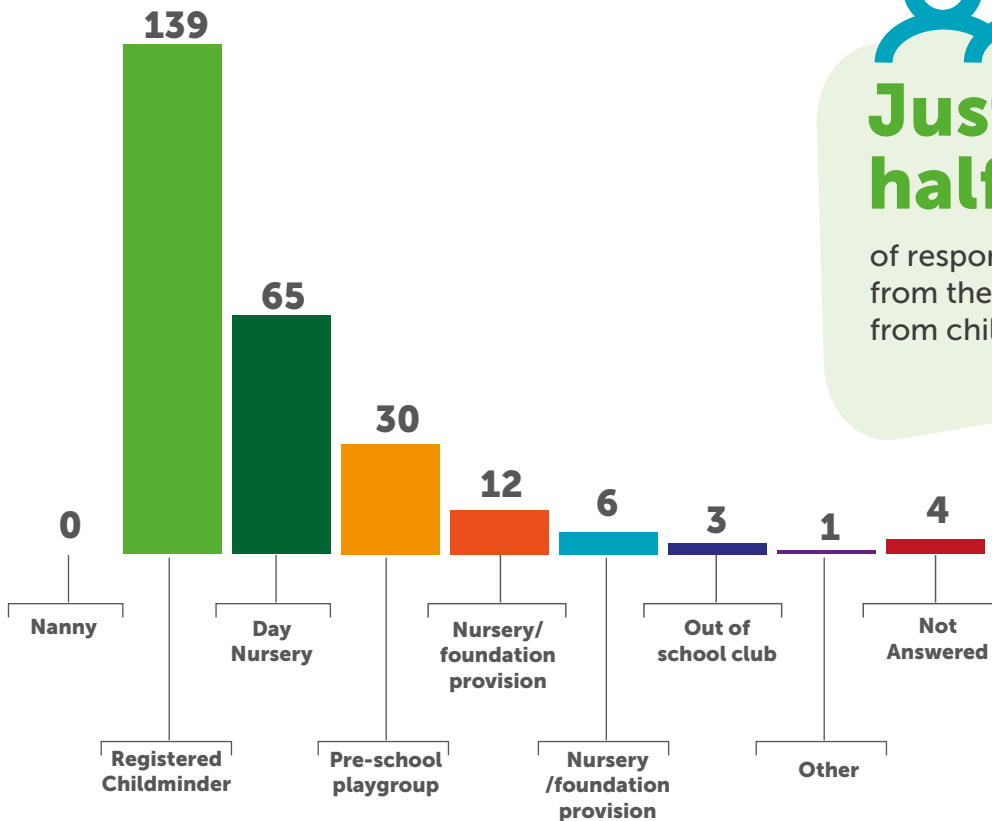
### Awareness/Knowledge

- About **Half** of providers knew about the Healthy Start scheme
- **Three Quarters** did not know where parents could use the Healthy Start vouchers in exchange for food and milk.
- **Three Quarters** did not know where parents could use the Healthy Start vouchers in exchange for vitamins.
- **The Vast Majority** (91%) stated yes or maybe to being interested to promoting Healthy Start within their setting.
- **The Vast Majority** of settings (90%) were aware of the "5 a day" campaign. A similar majority (83%) were confident to talk to parents about the campaign.
- Over **Half** (53%) of settings were not aware of the "Eat Better Start Better " voluntary food and drink guidelines for early years settings
- Of those who had an awareness of the guidelines about a **Third** (35%) had used the guidance in the provision of food in their setting
- Settings reported gaining knowledge and awareness of key healthy living messages from a wide range of sources with most gaining this information from advice/ guidance from government and national public health campaigns. A good number utilise the local authority provider networks for this.



## 1. Response

### 1.1: What type of childcare provider are you?

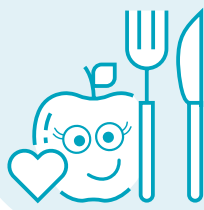


**Just over  
half (53%)**

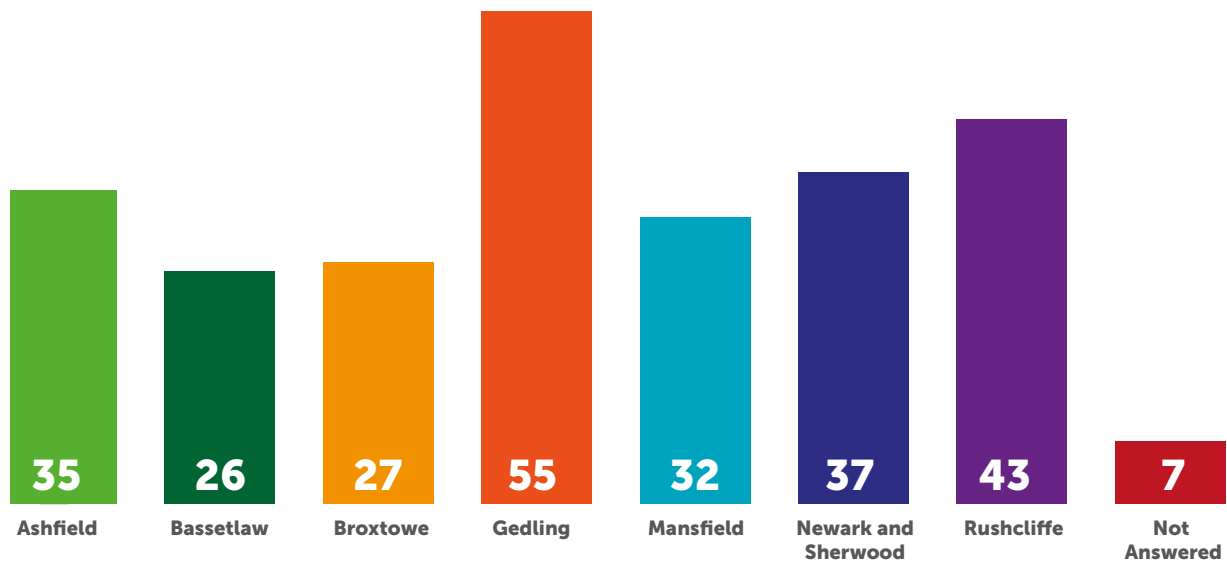
of responses received  
from the survey were  
from childminders

- **1 in 4** responses were from private day nurseries
- **5%** of responses were from nursery/foundation provision within a local authority maintained school
- **2%** of responses were from nursery/foundation provision within independent school (age Academy, Free school, Private school)
- **1%** of responses were from out of school clubs
- A small selection would describe their setting as other which includes:
  - 1 pre school, after school club and holiday club
  - 1 private nursery for children aged 1-5 term time only
  - 1 private provision within local authority school

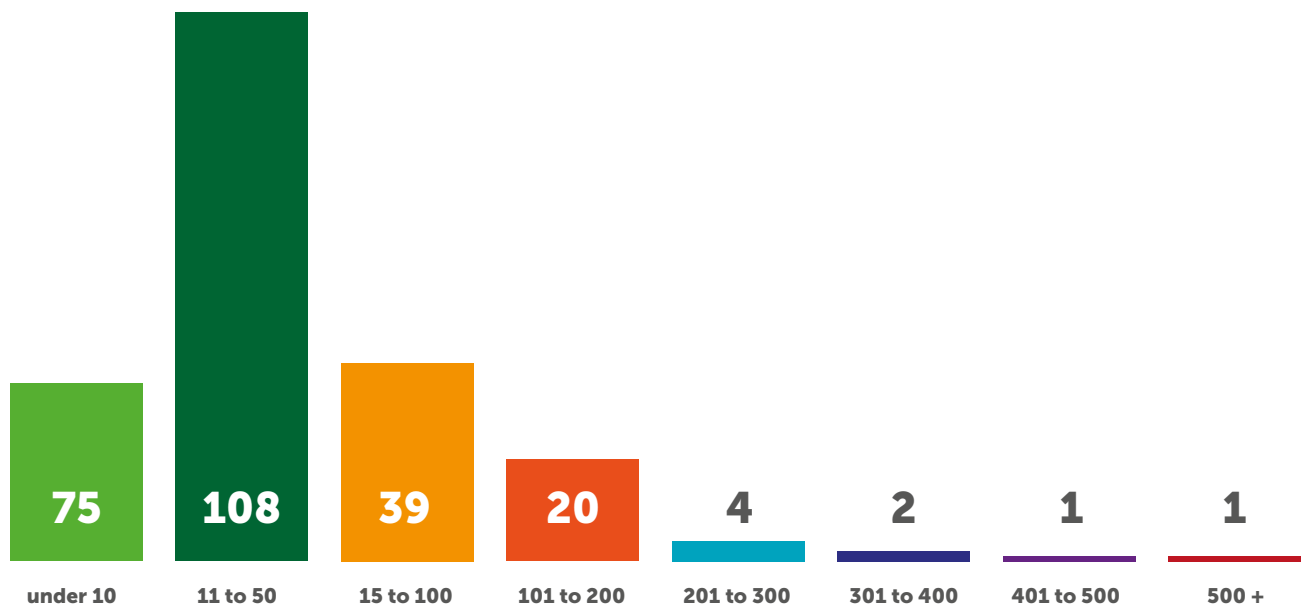


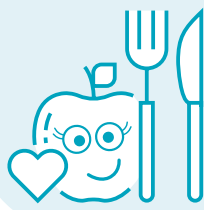


## 1.2: Which district is your provision based in



## 1.3 Approximately how many Children were on role as of Jan 2020 ?





## 2. Food Provision

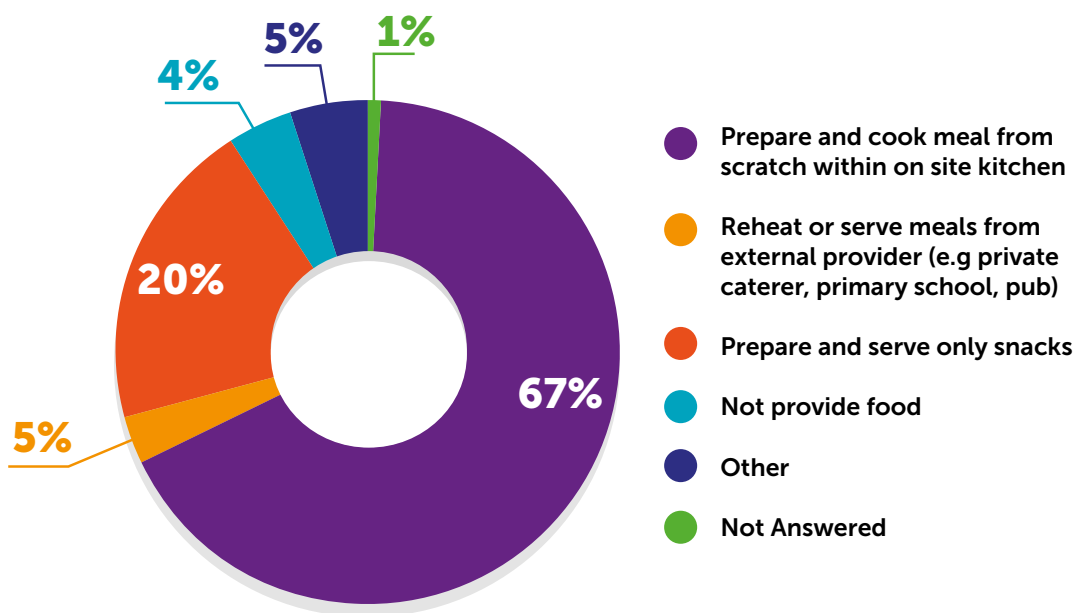
### 2.1 When asked about the Food provided within the setting

- **20%** Prepare and serve only snacks
- **3%** Reheat or serve meals from an external provider (eg private caterer, primary school, pub)
- **4%** Don't provide food
- **5%** stated other which includes:
  - **8** respondents said that parents provide a pack lunch
  - **3** respondents said that parents provided meals which are re-heated on site
- **1** respondent said that on site school provided the settings with hot meals

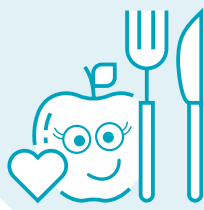


**67%**

**prepare and cook meals from scratch within onsite kitchen**

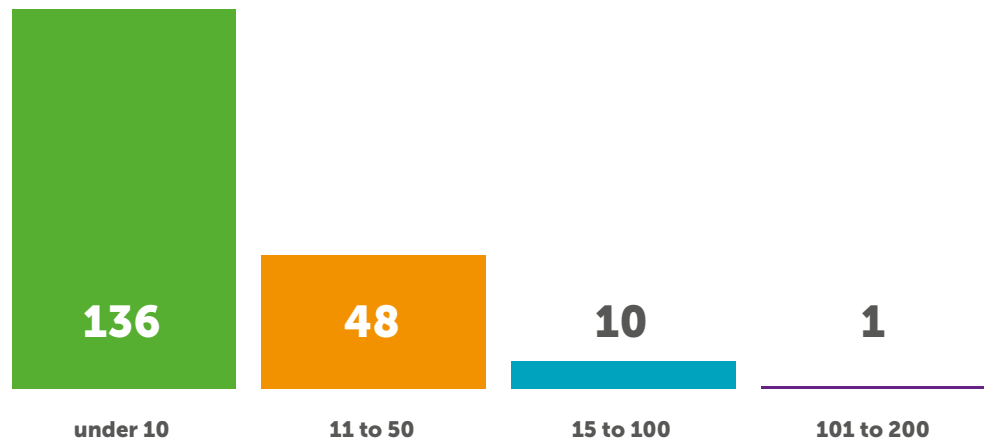


Most children bring a packed lunch or parents can order a hot lunch to be delivered by the local pub.

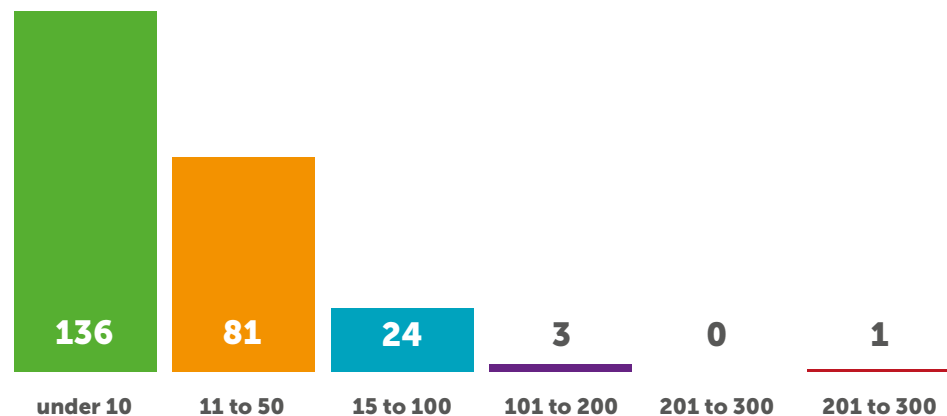


## 2.2: On a typical day approximately how many children stay in your setting for:

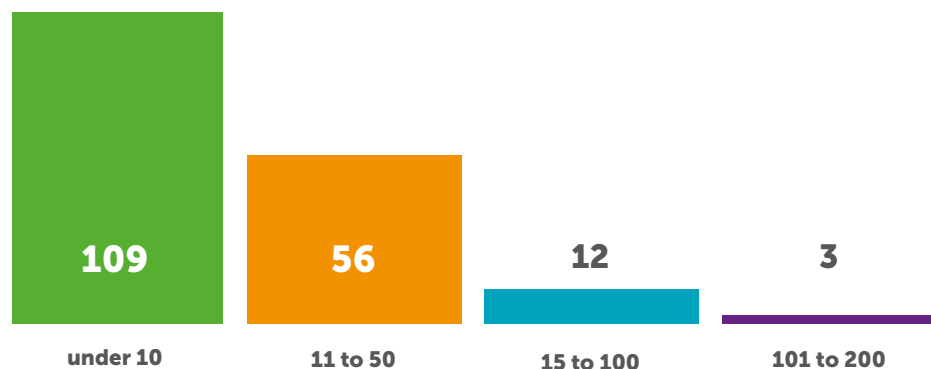
### Breakfast

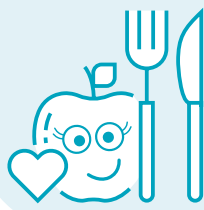


### Lunch



### Tea





### 2.3: Does your setting offer additional support to the 2 year funded children to encourage healthy eating?

- In Total **58%** of respondents didn't provide any specific Healthy Eating support to 2 year funded children
- **38%** do provide additional support with some examples below:
- **13** settings provided a funded meal for 2 year funded children.

//

We provide a nutritional hot lunch and desert each day for all 2 year funded children free of charge in addition to fruit/veg snack and a meal.

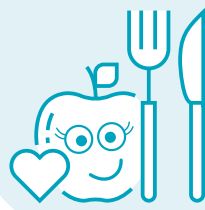
//

- **3** settings provided a Pack lunch for 2 year funded children
- **21** settings provided specific activities around food and nutrition for 2 year funded children.
- **11** settings promote healthy eating at home to parents through newsletter.
- **2** settings promote healthy eating at home to parents through social media
- **16** settings provided free and substantial snacks
- **1** chain of settings have recruited a Physical Activity and Nutritional coordinator to focus on promoting healthy eating and physical development.

//

We do not charge parents for meals here, they are included in the funding, So if a child receives 15 hours funding they pay no additional charge for meals here, we also have a visit from a woman that comes to cook, bake and prepare food with the children once a week, She will also send recipes home with the children of what has been made for parents to try and taste at home.

//



## 2.4 Are Children allowed to bring Pack lunches

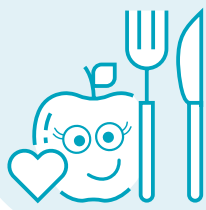
Option	Total	Percent
No	88	34%
Yes	168	64.%
Not Answered	6	2.%

## 2.5 Do you currently provide Parents and Carers with any guidance on packed lunches?

Option	Total	Percent
No	96	37%
Yes	86	33%
Not Answered	80	30.%

## 2.6 If So What Kind of guidance do you currently provide?

Option	Total	Percent
In-house guidance/policy on healthy packed lunches	39	15%
External guidance on healthy packed lunches e.g. change for life, Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England	12	5%
In-house guidance/policy on food allergens and packed lunches	34	13%
External guidance on food safety and packed lunches eg Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England	5	2%
Not Answered	172	66%



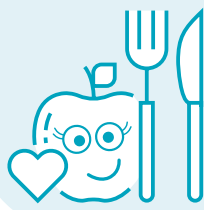
## 2.6 (continued) What would you find helpful to have in relation to healthy eating.

- **161 (61%)** providers wanted guidance on healthy pack lunches to give to parents/carers
- **140 (53%)** wanted guidance on food allergens and pack lunches to give to parents
- Most of the barriers that settings faced include engagement with Parents and getting them on board with Healthy pack lunch messages and increased efforts to help support and educate parents.

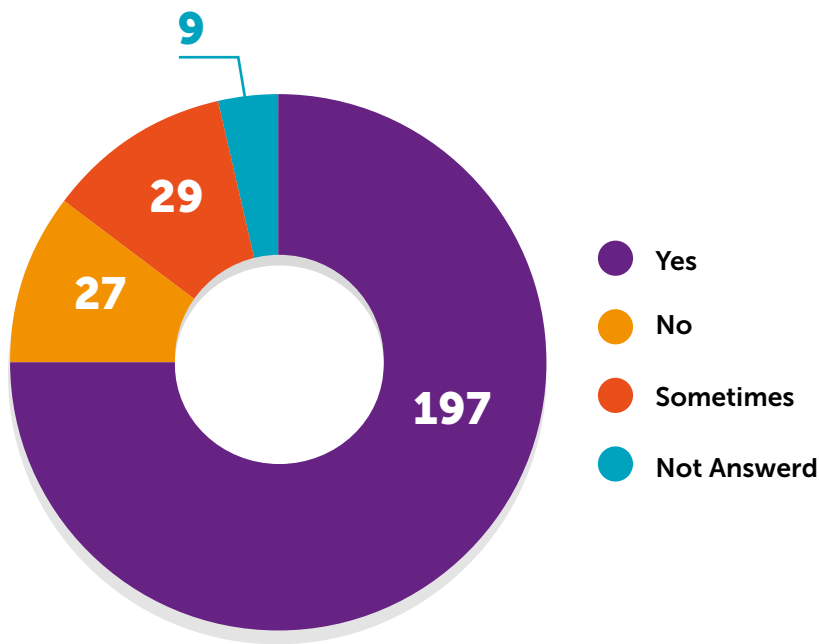
I don't think Parents would appreciate such guidance and feel possibly offended. A General policy or guidance published/enforced by Early years would therefore be much more helpful. A document similar to the allergens we received a few years ago only this document should stipulate no chocolate, crisps and other unhealthy foods in lunch boxes similar to schools.

## 2.7 If you are on the site of a Local Authority School, are you aware that children who attend over the lunchtime period (who meet the criteria) are eligible for a free school meal.

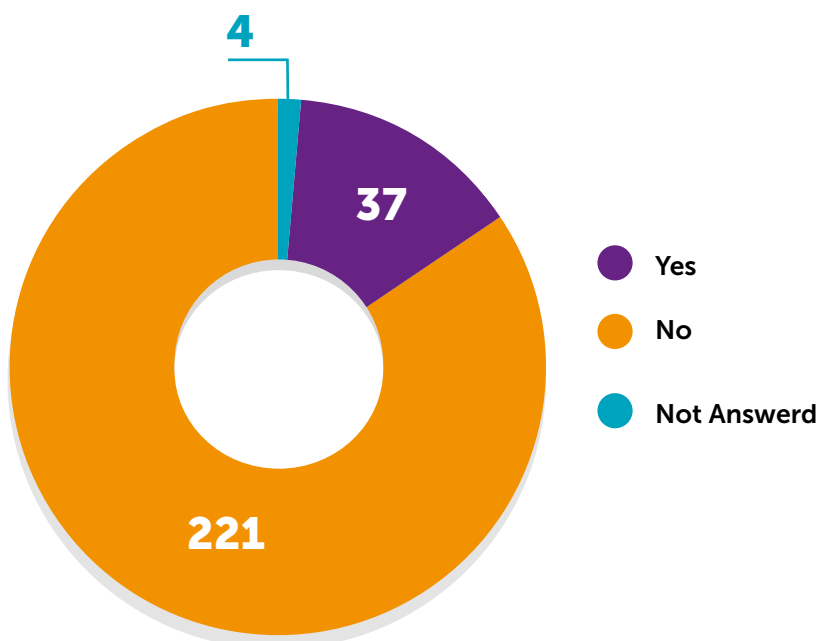
- **68% (177)** of respondents were not on the site of a Local authority school
- **5% (14)** of those on a school site were aware that children were eligible for a free school meal
- The reasons for not taking up this option were:
  - Level of staffing needed to look after children,
  - Setting on school land but not attached to school (eg playgroup)
  - Children leaving the setting before Lunchtime.
  - Parents preferring their children to stay in setting for lunch.

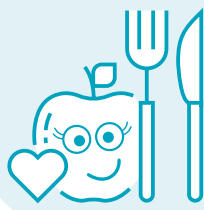


## 2.8 Do you/your staff sit and eat together with the children at least once a week?



## 2.9 Are Families/carers invited to eat together with their child/ children in your setting at least once per term?





## 2.9 (continued) If No what are the barriers to this?

- **13** providers stated space in the setting was the main barrier



We have done this but the numbers are too high for our dining room to manage and then the changes to the catering service meant that hours were lost in the kitchen and it would have been impossible to do. It's a shame because the parents loved it.



- **6** providers suggested time and space is a barrier
- **115** providers suggested parents at work so couldn't attend

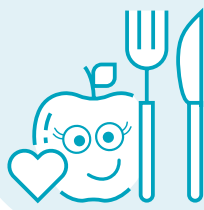


Private nursery so parents are at work when children with us. Also not suitable as the children become very confused and upset if they come to eat and then have to leave to go back to work.

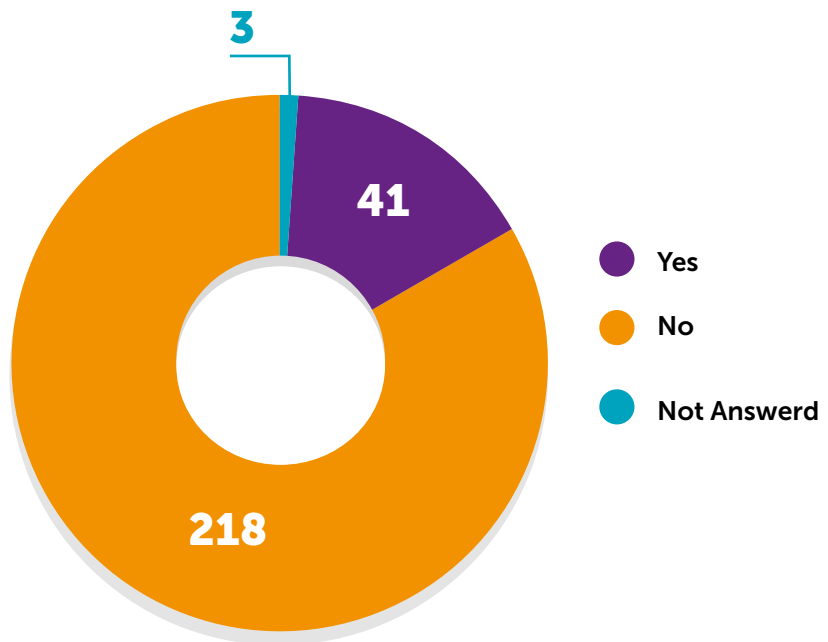


- **13** providers have never tried but would consider this in the future
- **3** providers said that it would disrupt the children too much
- **4** Providers said that it would be difficult due to varying pick up times
- **1** provider stated it would be a safeguarding issue
- **10** childminders said that the setting is their family home and wouldn't feel comfortable.





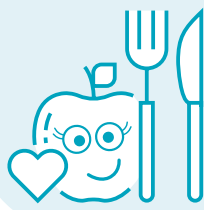
### 2.10 Do you have a Healthy Food and Drink Policy?



### How do you share the policy with Parents?

- Some providers had no policy but held informal discussions with parents
- 4 providers stated shared by E mail
- 3 Providers publish on website
- 5 Providers display it on noticeboard
- 7 Providers discuss at initial meeting/induction pack
- 3 providers discuss at parents evening/open days
- 6 providers use online App Babies days
- 2 Providers share via social media.

We give parents a list of all of our policies, our policy and procedure file is available for parents to view at any of our sessions. We also offer to email specific policies to parents upon request.



## 2.11 How do you manage Fussy Feeders ?

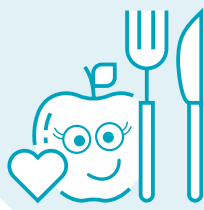
Option	Total	Percent
Provide staff with training on how to handle children who are fussy eaters	49	18%
Offer 1 to 1 support to children who are fussy eaters	134	51%
Use play strategies to encourage children to try different food	164	63%
Individualize the food offer to children based on their preferences	83	32%
Allowing families to send in food to meet child's preferences	172	30%
Other (please state)	32	12%
Not Answered	6	2%

### Other examples of managing fussy feeders included:

- Rewards and praise for trying different foods such as stamp and color chart
- Working alongside parents
- Staff role modelling at mealtimes
- Providing a selection of different foods to try
- Food activities with children (eg try it days).

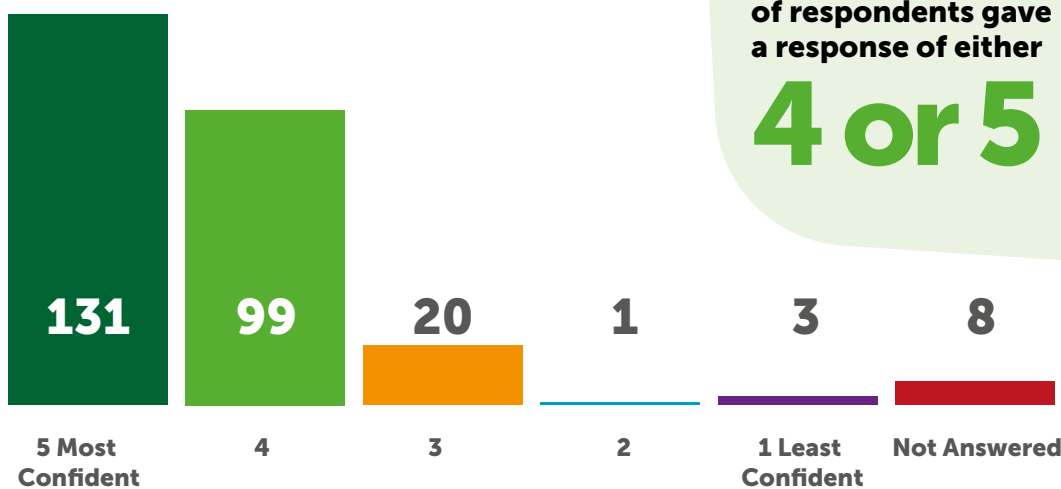
Support children to try new foods in a low pressure way, cooking and exploring food, work with parents to ensure we are working together and support them to introduce new foods at home.

we do activities with food, let them prepare snack, get them involved in setting tables etc and we find that some fussy feeders will try things if they have grown them themselves in the garden.



## 3. Confidence

### 3.1 How confident do you feel about providing healthy meals in your setting from 5 to 1 (5 being most confident)



Settings generally rated themselves as having high levels of confidence in relation to providing healthy meals in their settings.

# 88%

of respondents gave a response of either

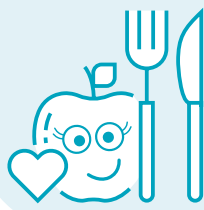
# 4 or 5



### 3.2 Thinking about what would make you feel more confident about providing healthy meals in your setting, what topic areas would you be interested in knowing more about?

(respondents could tick more than one box)

- **49%** of providers said they would be interested in knowing more about fussy feeders and tips to overcome this
- **38%** would be interested in healthy eating/portion sizes for children under 5
- **33%** would be interested in tips to reduce waste
- **31%** would be interested in saving costs
- **29%** would be interested in healthier meal planning
- **27%** would be interested in a criteria/award scheme for the early years
- **8%** would be interested in food preparation tips.

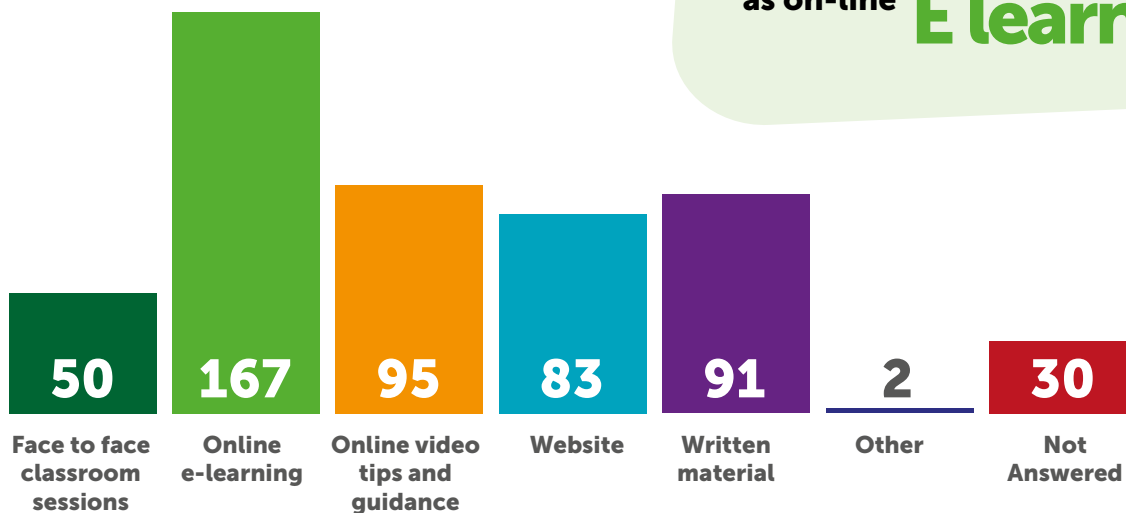


### 3.3 If you would like further support sessions/training how would you like these delivered?

# 63%



of respondents asked for sessions/training to be delivered as on-line **E learning.**

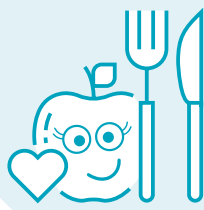


- **36%** would be interested in online video tips
- **31%** wanted access to a dedicated website
- **19%** were interested in face to face classroom sessions.

### 3.4 Would you be interested in being part of regular sessions to meet with peers, share best practice, challenges and work to support each other in relation to healthier food within your setting

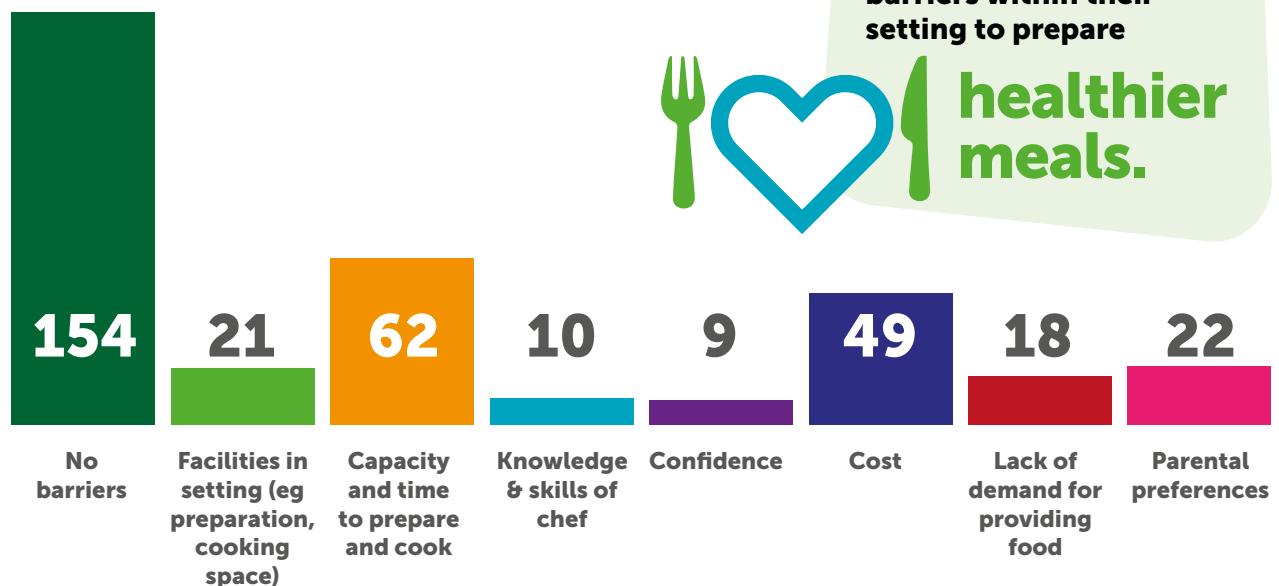
(known as a community of practice)

- **38** respondents (14%) were interested in being part of the community of practice
- **145** respondents (55%) would be interested but need more information.



## 3. Current Standards and Challenges/barriers

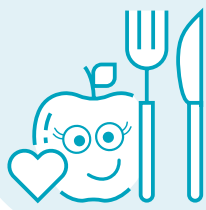
### 3.5 What barriers might there currently be within your setting to provide healthier food/meals?



- The greatest barrier identified was capacity **(23%)** and time to prepare and cook
- Cost was the next biggest barrier identified with **(18%)** highlighting this as a barrier
- Some other issues that were raised included **parents not being interested, waste food** due to children not eating the food provided and practical issues such as **staffing, storage** and the **limitations in the setting**.

I used to cook, but it's too much responsibility and differentiation to cook for 5 different backgrounds and meet their needs and follow allergy advice whilst also provide activities for the kids, answer e mails and observe kids and have the time for other responsibilities.

**- Quote from childminder**



## Standards of current food provision

### 3.6 If Food is prepared, served and/or brought into your setting do you have any feedback about the food provision?

#### Quality of Ingredients

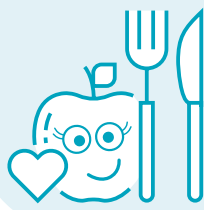
- Respondents were generally very positive about the quality of their ingredients.
- Most talked about buying fresh ingredients at supermarkets or from local suppliers on a regular basis
- Some respondents talked about using a mix of fresh and frozen produce.
- There were a couple of comments made about the high cost of locally sourced food and it was suggested this was a barrier with a preference to source from supermarket
- Most of the concerns raised were around children bringing in unhealthy food and drinks from home and the amount being brought in by children.

I buy fresh fruit and veg from the local green grocer and meat and fish from the supermarket fresh counter.

#### Variety of meals produced (seasonal, 4 weekly cycles)

- The majority of respondents referred to regularly changing meal plans, from weekly cycles to eight weekly or term based cycles
- Many talked about seasonal changes to meals
- A couple of smaller settings talked about some of the factors that make variation more difficult such as time available to them and fussy feeders.

I try to vary meals from week to week, but its sometimes can be tricky. The number of children I cook for is very small so meals tend to be planned around seasonal produce The time I have available to prepare meals and also if there are any foods that specific children dislike or have allergies to.



## Standards of current food provision (continued)

### Knowledge of best practice for age group

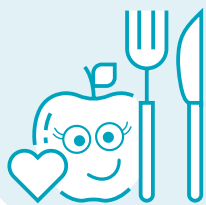
- Respondents reported having a good level of general knowledge about best practice for children in the early years
- Most respondents gained information from nationally recognized websites and E learning packages including Nottinghamshire County Council school meals training and Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young (HENRY)
- Some respondents talked about national guidance including 'Eat Better Start Better' guidance
- Some respondents reported a good level of knowledge gained from students having studied the level 3 childcare qualification and said they gained ideas on how to make healthy eating fun through this
- A clear gap in knowledge was around the correct portion sizes for children in the early years.

// We provide good portion sizes always enough for seconds. //

### Knowledge of basic food hygiene skills

- Respondents preparing food generally have a minimum level 3 Food hygiene certificate
- Although food hygiene is not mandatory for childminders most childminders do use the "Safer Foods Better Business for childminders" resource published by Food.gov
- Some respondents did suggest that all staff within the setting are educated to at least level 2 food hygiene to support snack preparation in settings.

// Food Hygiene certificate completed annually on [childcare.co.uk](http://childcare.co.uk), I'm registered with local authority for preparing food as a business and I hold GCSE Food & Nutrition Grade B. //



## Standards of current food provision (continued)

### Guidance on special diets/allergens

- Respondents reported a good level of general knowledge about best practice for children in the early years
- The importance of responding to special diets and allergens was held in high regard and many examples of good practice identified
- Many settings talked about collecting allergen information on induction/enrollment and making this information available to all staff involved in food preparation
- Settings talked about access to a wide range of training including Nottinghamshire County Council school meals, EpiPen training and other free allergen training modules.

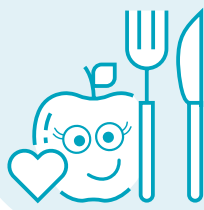
“ All allergens are visible with our menus so parents/staff and carers can visually see what meals go to what food group and allergen. Children with dietary requirements are catered for and will have an alternative meal cooked which is similar to the other children's where possible. ”

### 3.7 Would you be interested in exploring further an option to purchase your hot food offer from Nottinghamshire County Council's school meal service for your children?

- **15** settings stated that YES they would be interested in exploring this option further
- Out of these 15 settings **11** were childminders, **2** were before/after school clubs and **2** were private day care providers
- The reasons for not being interested in this offer included: Small numbers of children in the setting, cost, happy with current arrangements and chef/cooking themselves with children involved.

“ I am confident that the food I cook and provide is sufficient to meet the needs of the children I care for. Cooking a meal is a family activity and for many children if they didn't see me do it, they'd never see a meal made from scratch. ”





## Nottinghamshire Childhood Obesity Trailblazer

We are always wanting to improve the service we provide to the children we care for and the parents who pay us for best quality care. We are happy to advice and guidance to keep improving on our practice and reflect on what we offer. Happy to be part of any incentives that improve the health and quality of life of young children (and hopefully the staff too!).

School seem to get fruit / veg delivered as snacks for the EYFS children (at least). Could this be available for non school EYFS settings.

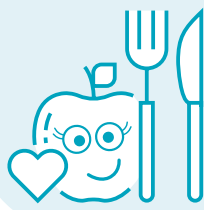
We would love information booklet on simple top tips for parents pack lunches and drink options.

The offer to buy prepared meals would free up more time to spend with my children where I would normally be preparing a cooked meal. Yes this is something I would definitely be interested in.

Lots of parents seem to over fill them and give children lots of options of what to eat/leave. Also sweets/chocolate bars sometimes put in which we don't want. We advise parents a couple of times a year on these issues, but anything else you could offer with guidance would be appreciated.

We feel we do a really good job in promoting healthy eating to children and families, we do however find it exhausting keeping up our standards and often cook outside work hours to prepare meals so that preparation time doesn't mean that were not meeting the requirements of our childminded children.

It is increasingly difficult to provide healthy nutritious home cooked meals when I work alone, I have often wondered for a while about asking parents to I provide packed lunches, but it's not something I really want to do. I want the children to have access to a balanced diet that's inclusive of all of them so they all have access to a balanced diet but cost and time do make this difficult. I do find I spend a lot of time in the kitchen, that's the detracted from them.



## 4. Awareness and Knowledge

### 4.1 Are you aware of the Healthy Start Scheme?

**49%**

of providers were not aware of the Healthy start scheme

**76%**

of providers did not know where the Healthy start Food distribution points were in their area

### 4.2 Do you know where people can spend their Healthy Start voucher locally to your provision?

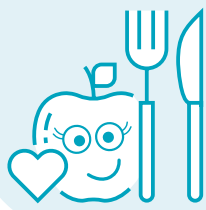
### 4.3 Do you know where people can collect Healthy Start vitamins locally to your provision?

**76%**

of providers did not know where the Healthy start vitamin distribution points were in their area

### 4.4 Would you be interested in promoting the Healthy Start scheme within your setting?

- **36%** of providers said YES they would be interested
- **56%** of providers said Maybe, would need more information
- **6%** said NO they would not be interested.



## Healthy Start (continued)

### 4.1 Do you have any further comments on the Healthy Start Scheme?

- Several providers commented that they did not think any children in their setting would be eligible for the Healthy start scheme as parents were on good incomes
- Other respondents were interested in the scheme and keen to promote it.

I have not heard of it. I think Childminders are often missed off any advertising as their children may be grown up so they do not usually go to children's centres and other places where they could get this information.

## Nursery Milk Scheme

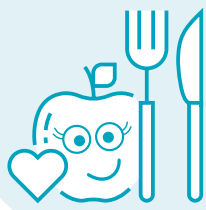
### 4.7 Are you aware of the nursery milk scheme?

- **55%** of providers were aware of the scheme and take part in it
- **35%** of providers were aware of the scheme but did not take part in it
- **7%** were not aware of the scheme

### Further comments about the scheme included:

- Local milk provider doesn't operate in my area
- System too complex
- Childminders not eligible for the scheme
- No dairy alternatives available as part of the scheme
- Reliance on parents to register child for scheme.

Its very complicated and I ended up getting billed for milk because I didn't fill in an application correctly even though I explained which children I had and the age of each child. It was far easier to buy the milk.



## 5 a day campaign

### 4.8 Are you aware of the 5 a day campaign?

- **91%** of providers were aware of the campaign
- **7%** of providers were not aware of the campaign
- **2%** did not answer the question.

### 4.9 Are you confident to talk to parents about the 5 a day campaign?

- **84%** of providers were confident to talk to parents about the campaign
- **7%** of providers were not confident to talk to parents about the campaign.
- **3%** did not answer the question.

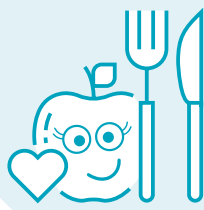
### 4.10 Further comments about the campaign included:

- Most respondents were positive about the scheme and referred to actively promoting it.

We do try to ensure all children in our care get their 5 a day with us just in case they don't get any fruit or vegetables when they're back home. We provide fresh fruit, salad and vegetables at snack time to supplement packed lunches and at evening meal time.

I think childminders have an important part to play in 5 a day as if the children have a piece of fruit in their lunch boxes and they don't want to eat it it is a chance missed for them to have one of their 5 a day, so encouraging them to try it at lunchtime is very important.

Free fruit and vegetables should be available in all early years settings daily.



## Eat Better Start Better Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines

**4.11** Are you aware of the new version (updated 2017) "Eat Better, Start Better Voluntary Food and drink guide-lines for Early years settings.

**53%**

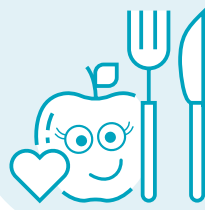
of providers were not aware of the guidelines



- **44%** of providers were aware of the guidelines

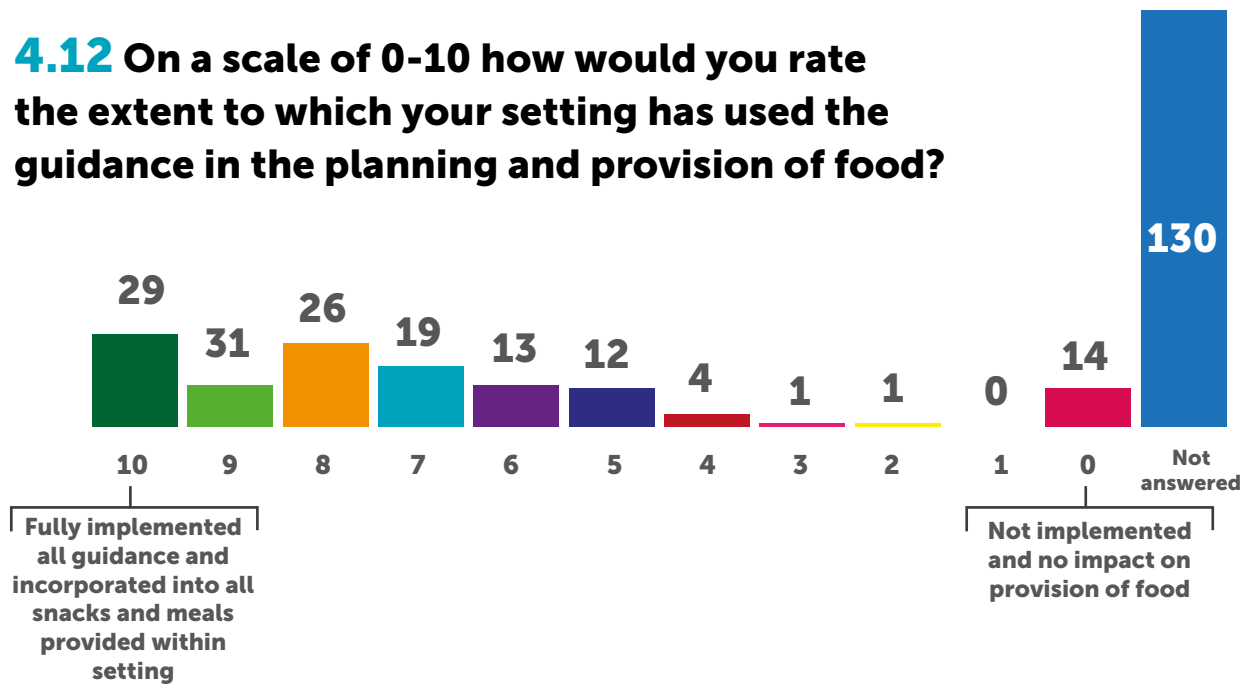
**If Yes have you used the guidance in the planning and provision of food in your setting?**

- **35% (92)** of providers responded that they had used the guidance in the provision of food in their setting
- **9% (25)** of providers responded that they had NOT used the guidance in the provision of food in their setting
- **55% (145)** did not answer the question.

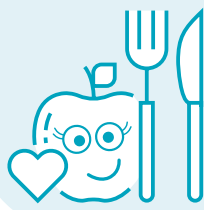


## Eat Better Start Better Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines

**4.12** On a scale of 0-10 how would you rate the extent to which your setting has used the guidance in the planning and provision of food?

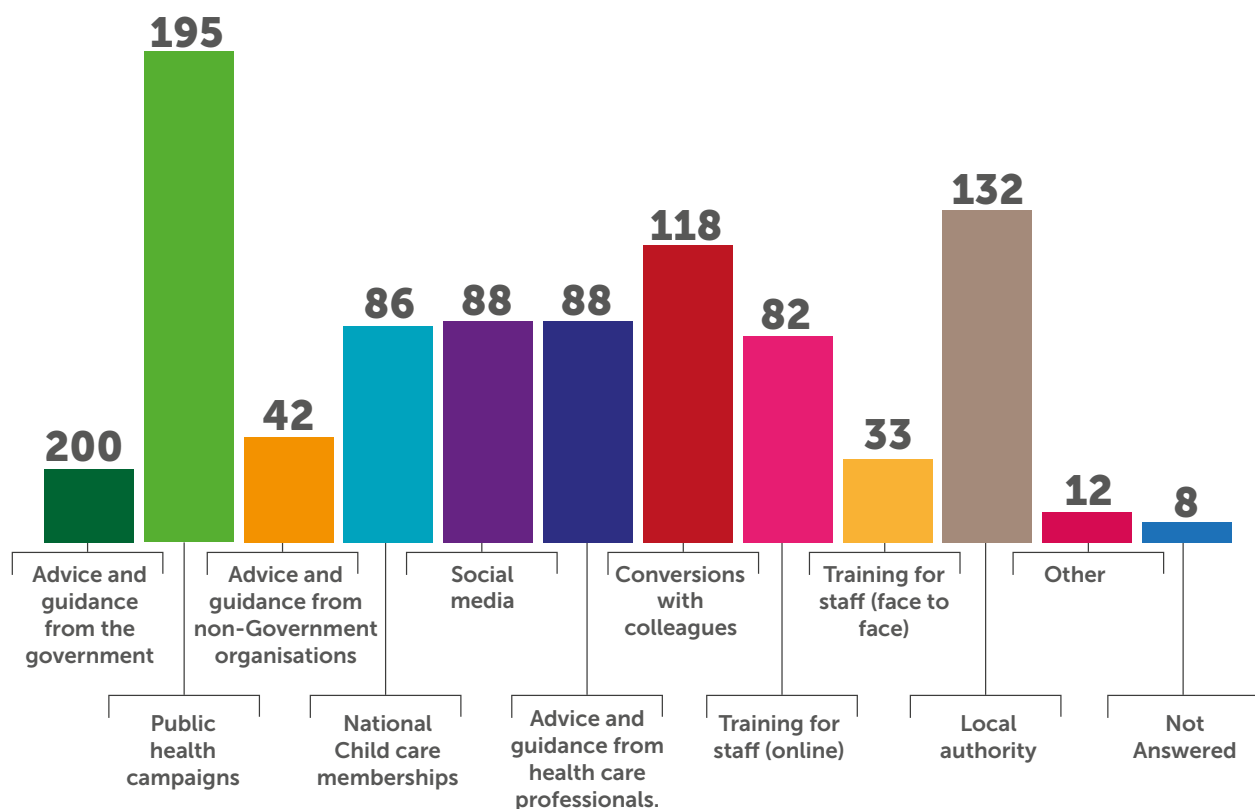


- Just under half of respondents (49%) chose not to answer this question
- Out of the 103 that did answer the question 58 (56%) rated themselves as 7 or above, suggesting around half the number of respondents implementing the guidance
- 20 (19%) providers rated themselves 4 or below with 14 of those 20 stating the guidance was not used at all.



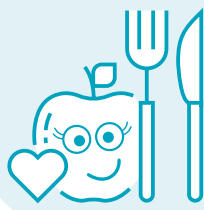
## Sources of key healthy living messages

**4.13** Where do you usually gain your knowledge and awareness of key healthy living messages from? (responders could tick more than one)



**Other places that people gained knowledge from included:**

- Senior Management
- Personal training, knowledge and experience, lifelong knowledge and parenthood
- Children's Centre
- Nursery Chef
- Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)
- Internet.

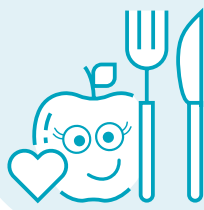


## 6. Next steps/Work Streams

### Project Team

- Work with Early Childhood Services and delivery support partner to investigate practicalities, IT skills/equipment to set up virtual community of practice based on settings expressing an interest
- Seek clarification re requirement for childminders to be registered as a food business as part of practice and the utilisation of the "safer foods better business" guidance
- Work with delivery partner to test out the purchase of hot food from Nottinghamshire County Council school meals service model with x 3 settings to gain learning from this
- Investigate a system with school meals service for childminders to either collect hot meals from a school local to them or have them delivered similarly to 'meals on wheels'
- Work with school meals service to have online cookery demonstrations and step by step healthy meals for chefs to learn new dishes
- Further investigation into funded meals for 2 year funded children in some settings and how this can be replicated
- Explore how to develop and support less confident settings
- Commission 'Food For Life' to work with 7 settings (one per district) to obtain Early years award and measure impact of this improvement in practice and more specifically improved nutritional content of food served
- Raise awareness of Healthy Start and work with settings to promote widely (Healthy Start lead)
- Work with Loughborough University to roll out training to settings identified (fussy feeders).
- To link in the selected settings working towards Food for Life Early years award with surrounding settings in districts across networks of providers to share best practice and learning throughout wider network of settings





## 6. Next steps/Work Streams

### Community Of Practice

- Work with the Policy Innovation Research Unit (PIRU) to support parental involvement in the Community of Practice.
- Consider guidance on healthy pack lunches and how this can be shared
- Consider guidance on food allergens to give to parents and how this can be shared
- Further exploration of opportunities to invite families/carers into the setting to eat with the children
- How can we involve/engage parents further in healthy eating/discussions about food? Different types of communication with parents?
- Consider type of food being brought into settings by parents. Guidance? Support?
- Consider support around portion sizes for the various age groups (for settings)
- Discuss the provision of free fruit and veg for EYFS children and its availability for private providers.

**The Nottinghamshire Childhood Obesity Trailblazer project team would like to thank the Early Years team at Nottinghamshire County Council, those Early Years providers who tested and helped shape the questionnaire and all the Early Years providers who took the time to complete the questionnaire and provide valuable feedback.**