



Evaluation of the Let's Get Cooking programme
Final Report

January 2012

**SCHOOL
FOOD TRUST**

**CHILDREN'S
FOOD TRUST**
Eat Better Do Better

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1 Executive Summary

In 2007, the School Food Trust was awarded £20 million funding from the Big Lottery Fund, to set up and support 5,000 cooking clubs for children and their families.

Three thousand new cookery clubs, and 2,000 associate clubs (existing after-school cooking clubs joining the network) were established in England, with priority given to schools in the most disadvantaged areas.

Let's Get Cooking supports clubs by offering specialist training for adult helpers, access to funding and a wide range of resources. Let's Get Cooking clubs are run by parents, school cooks, teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers from the school community. Clubs receive funding to help with the costs of ingredients and equipment. All clubs are encouraged to attend regular training events and use the support and advice of expert Let's Get Cooking staff.

Clubs are supported to become sustainable within their school, ensuring the benefits of Let's Get Cooking are seen for many years. Clubs were recruited in every local authority in England.

Let's Get Cooking clubs are required to cook healthy food with their members. All clubs sign up to an agreement to cook '*good food that is good for you*' from basic ingredients, mainly using recipes provided by Let's Get Cooking. All children and adults who have prepared food in a club session are given a free copy of the recipe immediately after they have prepared it. Club leaders actively encourage club members to replicate recipes and skills learnt at home.

Let's Get Cooking uses a skills progression approach. Skills progression charts are provided by Let's Get Cooking for use by club leaders to help guide activities. The charts can be used to measure progress of club members and their families as they improve their cooking skills and learn new ones.

'Spoon levels' show stages of difficulty for particular skills (with one spoon being the easiest level, up to four spoons being the hardest), such as reading, understanding and following a recipe, and weighing and measuring.

Clubs are now being supported to help them to become self-sustaining by generating their own funding. The original plan was to monitor and support clubs for a five year period, which included two years after the last clubs were set up.

Let's Get Cooking had three main targets:

- By the end of the 5-year programme, 1,106,300 children, family members and members of the local community will increase their food preparation or cooking skills as a result of Let's Get Cooking
- Seventy per cent of club members who learn a new healthy eating skill through Let's Get Cooking will replicate that skill at home
- Fifty per cent of club members will increase their intake of nutritionally healthy food.

The first target was evaluated using routine reporting information submitted by clubs using an on-line reporting system. The other two were measured using a specially designed questionnaire administered at two time points to club members in a representative sample (5.5%) of clubs. The evaluation had ethical approval from Kings College, London research ethics committee, and was carried out by the School Food Trust's research team.

Overall, Let's Get Cooking has exceeded its targets considerably. By the end of the evaluation period 1,773,970 people had benefitted either directly or indirectly as a result of the programme. The majority (92%) of club members had replicated a skill learnt at the club at home and each club member passed on their new knowledge to an average of 1.22 people. In addition to this, thousands of people attended community events organised by schools, making Let's Get Cooking a real success.

An impressive 58% of club members improved their eating habits after taking part in club activities and there was some limited evidence that there was a sustained improvement even after three months at which time club members were still cooking at home and had remembered important messages about healthy eating, food hygiene, and safety in the kitchen, particularly knife and cutting skills.

Comments received from the children showed not only how much they enjoyed the club activities but also the additional benefits:

"I have enjoyed my lessons here at the Cooking Club and learnt a lot of skills but at the same time made new friends and had fun!"

"You get to investigate and use different foods. You use teamwork and it just is fun."

"I like food that I wasn't so keen on before such as carrots and strawberries and raspberries."

"Spending time with my sister and learning different things."

"The eating, the getting messy. Meeting new friends."

"Get to be a group leader, its good, oh and I get to have sharp knives (mum wouldn't let me have ones like this at home)."

Adults who attended the clubs with their children also benefited, as did the club coordinators:

"I have enjoyed the cooking and doing something enjoyable and educational with my son."

"The group as a whole. Well put together. Great leadership and well explained."

"It is a fun and exciting way to teach children healthy recipes that we remember at home. I love eating our creations. The fajitas were lovely!"

"Having fun with the children watching them as they learn new skills and techniques."

Overall, Let's Get Cooking enables participants to acquire, in a fun environment, important skills that will be of benefit throughout life. Many of the skills learnt at the club are replicated at home, both while participants are still attending the club and in the three months following participation. As well as cooking skills, health and hygiene messages relating to cooking are remembered particularly well.

2 Introduction

As a result of a competitive bid in 2006, the School Food Trust received £20 million from the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to deliver the Let's Get Cooking (LGC) programme.

The programme aimed to establish a network of 5,000 cookery clubs in England over a five year period, with an increasing emphasis on targeting areas of high deprivation.

The programme was rolled out over three years to all 152 Local Authorities in England, with an emphasis on targeting areas of high deprivation. New clubs were recruited in 6 cycles (one cycle a term over a two year period). Clubs were recruited from approx. 25 local authority areas in each recruitment cycle. Training for new club leaders and demonstrators commenced in October 2007.

The clubs' aim was to teach healthy cooking skills to participants, who mainly comprised of children and young people who would then act as 'ambassadors' and disseminate their learned skills to members of the wider community. Each club, which has been encouraged to become self-sustaining, runs a series of activities, and it was anticipated that a new group of participants would attend each series.

The programme aimed to recruit and establish 3000 new cookery clubs, and 2000 associate clubs (existing after-school cooking clubs joining the network).

New clubs were eligible for practical training (an introductory session, two-day demonstrator training course, start-up day and regular conferences/top up training opportunities), resources (such as recipes and activity packs), on-going support from Let's Get Cooking staff, and £2,500 funding over a three-year period.

Associate clubs were eligible for the same resources, on-going support from Let's Get Cooking staff, regular conferences/top up training opportunities, and £500 funding spread over a one-year period.

Let's Get Cooking had three main targets or outcomes:

- By the end of the 5-year programme, 1,106,300 children, family members and members of the local community will increase their food preparation or cooking skills as a result of Let's Get Cooking.
- 70% of club members who learn a new healthy eating skill through Let's Get Cooking will replicate that skill at home.
- 50% of club members will increase their intake of nutritionally healthy food.

The first outcome was evaluated using routine information that every club is required to provide via an on-line monitoring facility. The evaluation of outcomes two and three was designed and managed by researchers from the School Food Trust using a representative sample of 271 (5.5%) clubs. Results from each phase of the evaluation, as the programme was rolled out, were presented in short reports which also included cumulative results. This report contains the final findings from the full dataset.

3 Study Design

3.1 Sampling

The programme aimed to establish 3000 new clubs over a three year period. This number included the 21 pilot clubs which operated from Spring 2007, and the 'development (post-pilot) cluster' which was recruited in October 2007 (20 schools in Yorkshire). It was anticipated that a further 2000 associate clubs, phased over a five-year period, would join the scheme.

Each Local Authority was allocated a number of clubs proportional to the total number of schools in the authority. Schools with high levels of free school meal eligibility were given priority.

The evaluation of the programme used a representative sample of 271 clubs (5.5%). These were randomly sampled, using stratified sampling to ensure a representative spread across regions, from schools that were successful in each round of recruitment.

Clubs were made aware, prior to signing up for inclusion into the Let's Get Cooking programme, of the evaluation process. Evaluation was compulsory for all clubs that were selected, and failure or refusal to comply ultimately resulted in their funding being withdrawn. In exceptional circumstances evaluation was postponed until the next available round of fieldwork. A sample of associate clubs was selected at each round of the evaluation. One club that was run under the partnership with Magic Outcomes (through their Supporting School Leadership programme) was also evaluated.

The evaluation of outcomes two and three was based on a questionnaire completed at the beginning and end of a series of activities. The extent to which participants changed their eating habits and transferred new healthy eating skills to the home environment was assessed using the questionnaire.

Towards the latter part of the programme it became apparent that the objectives were being met and that participants were beginning to eat more healthily. To measure whether this change persisted beyond participating in club activities the evaluation protocol was modified to include a three-month follow-up for the clubs evaluated during the final round of evaluation.

For the majority of the selected clubs participants attending one series of activities were evaluated. Baseline data collected at the beginning of the series were compared with data collected towards the end of the series of activities and with data collected at the three-month follow-up where appropriate. Data were collected using an age-appropriate self-complete questionnaire at each of the two (or three) time points. The data collection (including contacting schools, making appointments, administering questionnaires, data entry, and all associated administration) was outsourced via a competitive tendering process to TNS-BMRB^a. Quality assurance was provided by a researcher from the School Food Trust.

^a <http://www.tns-bmrb.co.uk/>

The evaluation was based on a rolling programme covering five years from 2008. To monitor any change in effectiveness as clubs became more mature the assessment of clubs was staggered across three years from their start, with some clubs sampled in Year 3 not being evaluated until Year 5.

In more detail, the proposal was to sample 300 new clubs (10% of the proposed 3000 new clubs) starting in each of years 1, 2 and 3. In order to monitor any change in effectiveness as clubs become more mature, the assessment of clubs was staggered across three years. As a result of the subsequent decision to include associate clubs in the sample and also to include a three-month follow-up in the final round of evaluation, the number of new Let's Get Cooking clubs sampled was reduced to 230 (from 8.8% to 7.7% of the new clubs).

Table 1. Numbers of clubs originally planned to be evaluated per year

Club start date	Evaluation period					Total
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Year 1	✓ (13)	✓ (19)	✓ (13)			45
Year 2		✓ (34)	✓ (42)	✓ (34)		110
Year 3			✓ (33)	✓ (41)	✓ (36)	110
Clubs to be evaluated	13	53	88	75	36	265

A sample of associate clubs was selected at each round of the evaluation and one club run under the partnership with the Magic Outcome programme was also evaluated.

3.2 Method

After undertaking a comprehensive literature search and consulting with a number of experts, self-complete questionnaires were selected as the method of choice for the evaluation rather than food diaries. This decision was influenced by time constraints, since it was important that the evaluation did not interfere too much with the practical cooking activity. The food diary approach was considered to be too time and labour intensive since it also requires considerable support in order to obtain accurate information. It was also thought to be less appropriate for younger children.

The questionnaire was based on the recall method, where participants were asked to remember what they had eaten and drank within a defined recent period. For the evaluation of the Let's Get Cooking programme, it was felt unnecessary to analyse all food or drink consumed, but rather to gain an impression of whether eating habits were generally 'healthy' or 'unhealthy'. It was therefore decided to provide a list of food items and ask participants to indicate (by a simple tick) those that they had consumed in a defined period. The list was not comprehensive (52 items) but the main food groups and foods commonly liked/eaten by children were included.

The period of recall in dietary survey is usually 24 hours.¹ For Let's Get Cooking it was important to make the questionnaire simple for younger children to complete and to make minimal demands on their often limited memory and concept of time. It was therefore decided to ask about food and drinks consumed 'yesterday and today'. As the clubs are usually after school, children would typically have eaten one evening meal as well as two breakfasts and two lunches, plus snacks. It was considered that this would give a reasonable impression of participants' eating habits.

Two versions of the questionnaire were tested: baseline and follow-up. The eating habits tick list (Section B) was the same in each version. The difference was in Section A which asked about that day's consumption of breakfast and whether a school lunch had been eaten in the baseline questionnaire, and questions about cooking skills learned at the club (and replicated at home) in the follow-up questionnaire.

The follow-up questionnaire, with wording modified for the time lapse since participating in club activities, was used for the three-month follow-up.

Infant age (key stage 1, ages 5 to 7) children were not expected to complete the same questionnaires as older children. Instead, a simple picture card exercise was developed to enable them to identify foods that they eat. The foods and drinks pictured were all 'healthy' and thus the number of foods eaten was the healthy food score. This was done as an individual exercise to minimise any effect of a group response (or copying from friends).

3.3 Ethical approval

Ethical approval for the evaluation was granted until 8th July 2012 by the Research Ethics committee of Kings College London (CREC/07/08-195).

3.4 Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire and infant picture card exercise were developed in collaboration with members of the Let's Get Cooking programme development and management team. The questionnaire was designed for easy completion by all participants in minimum time as required by the constraints of the club activities, while remaining sensitive to changes in eating habits over the duration of a series of club activities. A range of healthy and unhealthy foods was chosen to be representative of the foods likely to be eaten by participants (mostly school aged children and young people). Five 'neutral' items were included as they were considered to be common foods eaten by this age group, and would provide some children with an opportunity to tick at least one food. The final versions of the questionnaires are included in Appendix 1.

Both versions of the questionnaire were tested during June 2008 in seven of the Sheffield 'development' cluster clubs (on one occasion per club). The questionnaire was administered by a Let's Get Cooking researcher who answered any questions, gave assistance where necessary, and monitored ease of completion by participants.² The picture cards were tested in clubs which had infant age participants and were considered to be appropriate for the time available.

After the first round of the evaluation of cycle 1 clubs³ the question asking participants whether any of the skills learned at the club had been used at home and, if so, whether anyone had watched or helped was changed as it was considered that the question was not being interpreted as intended (see box below).

The original questions were:

- Have you **used** any of these skills **at home** since learning them at the club? (List of skills given)
- Have you shown anyone else (family or friends) how to do any of these skills?
- If you said yes to the last question, how many people (family or friends) did you show how to cook? **PLEASE WRITE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE**

The aim was to capture the number of people who might have seen the skill being performed, whether as an intentional demonstration by the participant or as some sort of vicarious activity. However, several participants aged 7-11 responded that they had not shown these skills to anyone which would suggest that they were unsupervised in the kitchen at home. Since this was unlikely, the question was changed to clarify the fact that anyone who was in the kitchen should be included, and not just those to who the child thought he/she was explicitly teaching or showing the skill.

The wording (of the second and third elements) was changed as follows:

- Have you **used** any of these skills **at home** since learning them at the club? (List of skills given)
- Was anyone else (family or friends) watching or helping you when you used these skills at home?
- If you said yes to the last question, how many people (family or friends) were watching or helping you? **PLEASE WRITE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE**

From the fourth round of the evaluation onwards, the follow-up questionnaire was amended to include the questions asked in the baseline questionnaire about the type of food eaten at lunch time. This aimed to capture any change in the take up of school lunches during participation in the club.

For the main study, the questionnaire was formatted for data entry using electronic scanning. Data collected using the picture cards were entered manually and were considered separately from the questionnaire data.

3.5 Fieldwork

Due to the geographical spread of the clubs, all fieldwork was carried out by an external agency. After a competitive tendering process, TNS-BMRB were recruited to conduct all fieldwork including arranging appointments with schools and data entry. All fieldworkers were trained by the School Food Trust researchers who also carried out quality assurance monitoring on a random sample of clubs throughout the whole period of the evaluation.

3.6 Data collection

Once a club was selected for evaluation, a letter was sent to the club's primary contact from the main Let's Get Cooking office. Following this, a project manager from TNS-BMRB contacted the club to clarify any uncertainties and to arrange suitable dates for baseline and follow-up data collection. A regional fieldworker received all appointment information and confirmed the details with the club co-ordinator 24 hours prior to the appointment.

The fieldworker visited the club for the duration of the session and administered the questionnaires to all the participants at a convenient break during the cooking activity. All parents/carers of participants were given the opportunity to opt their child out of the evaluation. Prior to completion of the questionnaire, the fieldworker explained the purpose and offered the chance for club members to opt out of participation.

The picture card exercise required individual adult attention and was completed by the younger children on a one-to-one basis at convenient times during the club session. The fieldworker recorded the responses on a recording sheet designed for the purpose.

The same methods were used for both full Let's Get Cooking clubs and associate clubs. For the one Magic Outcomes club, data were collected by a Magic Outcomes project worker who was familiar with the programme.

For those clubs participating in the modified evaluation with a three-month follow-up, the basic procedure was as above for the baseline and follow-up visits. Clubs selected for the three-month follow-up of the evaluation were sent a letter explaining the purpose and process of the additional visit. They were reminded of their obligation to participate in the evaluation, but to compensate for the additional burden they were offered £100, paid into their Let's Get Cooking account, on receipt of 3-month questionnaires from at least 70% of club members.

At the follow-up visit, the fieldworker ensured that at least one adult (club leader or school-based adult) was familiar with the method of administering the questionnaire and contact details of this adult were recorded. About ten weeks after the second fieldworker visit, a reminder e-mail was sent by the lead School Food Trust researcher. This was followed a week later by a phone call from TNS-BMRB to the responsible adult to further remind them about the final questionnaire and to confirm all details. A set of questionnaires, each with an identification number, was sent to each school. The adult responsible for administering the questionnaires arranged a suitable time for all children to complete them (typically a short period at lunch time). The completed questionnaires were returned to TNS-BMRB to be processed and scanned as explained below.

Since the change in eating habit is more reliably measured using the questionnaire rather than the picture cards, any clubs with only infant aged children were excluded from this extended evaluation. In clubs with children of infant and junior ages, only those who completed the questionnaires on the first or second occasion were required to take part in the three-month follow-up element.

3.7 Data entry and quality assurance

The data collected on the primary/secondary questionnaire were scanned by TNS-BMRB and supplied as an SPSS data file. Data from the Magic Outcomes club participants were entered manually and combined with the cycle one evaluation data. Data collected from infant aged participants, using the picture cards, were entered manually into an Excel sheet.

3.8 Data scoring

Each food item on the questionnaire was coded as 'healthy' (33) or 'unhealthy' (14) with five items being neither and thus not scored. A 'healthy food' score of the difference between the number of 'unhealthy' foods consumed from the number of 'healthy' foods consumed was computed, with greater positive value indicating relatively more 'healthy' compared with 'unhealthy' foods being eaten. The difference between these two scores gave an indication of the change between the two time points in the relative numbers of each type of item consumed. A change in the number of 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods eaten at the two time points was also computed, with a positive value indicating an increase in the number of those food items eaten at follow-up compared with baseline. These can be summarised using the following notation:

<p>'Healthy' items at baseline (H0) 'Unhealthy' items at baseline (Un0) 'Healthy' items at follow-up (H1) 'Unhealthy' items at follow-up (Un1)</p> <p>$H0 - Un0 =$ 'Healthy' score 0 $H1 - Un1 =$ 'Healthy' score 1 (A positive score indicates more 'healthy' than 'unhealthy' items)</p> <p>'Healthy' score 1 - 'Healthy' score 0 = Difference in 'healthy' score (A positive score indicates a positive change from baseline to follow-up)</p> <p>$H1 - H0 =$ 'Healthy' difference over time $Un1 - Un0 =$ 'Unhealthy' difference over time (A positive score indicates an increase in the consumption of each type of item from baseline to follow-up)</p>
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This method was extended logically to data collected in the three-month follow-up designed to measure any persistence over time.

Data from the infant aged participants were supplied in an Excel file and data were dealt with separately.

3.9 Statistical analysis and reporting

Statistical analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences⁴ (SPSS). Results from the cumulative dataset are shown and discussed. Data from the picture card exercise were analysed separately, again using SPSS.

4 Results

4.1 Sample size and timing of evaluation

Although the evaluation was compulsory for clubs that were sampled, several had not started activities at the time of sampling, or had run one series of activities and were not in a position to run another series until the following term. Where it was felt reasonable, clubs that were not active at the time of sampling were replaced with another of similar characteristics (i.e. from the same government office region and with a similar level of free school meal eligibility). Due to time constraints it was not possible to replace 12 of the 283 sampled clubs.

To monitor any change in effectiveness as clubs become more mature, the assessment of clubs was staggered across three years from their start, with some clubs sampled in Year 3 not being evaluated until Year 5. Although the time of evaluation was recorded, the number of clubs with a sufficiently long interval was not high enough for sub-group analysis. Anecdotal evidence and routine club reporting suggested that clubs were at least as effective as they matured as when they began. This could be attributed to increasing confidence of the club co-ordinators and leaders as well as familiarity with the process of running a club.

A total of 270 clubs participated in the main evaluation of which 26 clubs involved only key-stage 1 (infant aged) children who completed the picture card exercise. In addition one sampled club was held in a special school where the children had profound learning and physical difficulties and needs and were unable to participate in any evaluation. Several pupils in this school were unable to eat food that was not liquidised whilst others were on various other special diets. The club leader, however, was keen to show how the range of activities could be adapted for children with special needs. The club was visited by a TNS-BMRB researcher who compiled a short report outlining how the children could be introduced to smells or textures of new foods through senses other than taste. The club leader felt that the children enjoyed the activities and benefited from the new experiences. This was also emphasised in the TNS-BMRB report.

Of the 243 clubs with at least some pupils who completed the questionnaire, 56 were included in the three-month follow-up and were sent a package of questionnaires for administration by the club co-ordinator as explained above. Completed questionnaires were received from 44 of these clubs of which all except one received the incentive payment. The club that did not return sufficient questionnaires to qualify for the payment was contacted with an explanation.

4.2 Results from the questionnaire

4.2.1 Sample characteristics

Completed questionnaires were received from 2433 participants (attending 243 clubs) of whom 1754 attended both sessions and are included in the analysis estimating the change in eating habits. To gain an impression of the characteristics of all who attended the clubs, Table 2 shows the age of all participants excluding the adult participants. The average age of 9.7 years is consistent with the distribution of

all clubs across primary and secondary schools. Of the 2397 whose sex was recorded, 928 (39%) were male.

Table 2. Age of participants (years)

	Male (n=659)	Female (n=1053)	Overall (n=1712)
Mean	9.6	9.8	9.7
Median	9.0	10.0	10.0
Standard deviation	1.6	1.8	1.7
Range	7 to 17	7 to 18	7 to 18

Base: 1712

Of the 2188 participants who completed the questionnaire at baseline and responded to the questions asking about breakfast, the majority (1973; 90%) ate breakfast before leaving home (Table 3). Although most of these (1779) reported eating breakfast on only one occasion (1698 at home, 26 on the way to school, and 55 at a breakfast club) 21 participants reported eating at all three opportunities and a further 260 participants reported eating or drinking on two occasions: 151 ate on the way to school as well as having eaten at home, with 103 eating at home and at breakfast club. A further six participants ate on the way to school as well as at a breakfast club.

The majority of respondents had eaten at least something at lunchtime, with 88 responding to more than one of the options. It is quite likely that children who reported having had a school lunch augmented this with a snack brought from home, rather than eating both a school lunch and a complete packed lunch. Of the 227 (10%) of participants who reported not eating lunch, 16 had also not eaten breakfast. At least one respondent was from a club that was evaluated during the period of Ramadan and it is possible that since another three respondents that reported not eating breakfast or lunch were from a single club, they were likewise affected. In general, it is important that school pupils eat regularly so that they can maximise their potential during school lessons, and 10% is a relatively high proportion not eating lunch. There may be scope for future Let's Get Cooking sessions to stress the importance of regular meals, including the benefits of this in terms of weight control.

Although relatively few participants reported going off site at lunch time, this proportion may reflect the relatively high proportion of primary schools that run clubs. As well as secondary pupils being more likely than those in primary schools to respond that they leave the school premises to visit shops at lunchtime it is also possible that secondary school pupils eat a combination of food at lunchtime which explains why the lunch responses give a total of over 100%.

The take up of school lunches reported at baseline (44.9%) is higher than the national average.⁵ A possible explanation for this is that schools running Let's Get Cooking clubs are more engaged with the school food agenda and encourage pupils to have a school lunch. In addition, schools with a high proportion of children who are eligible for free school meals are given preferential sign up to host a club. Such schools are likely to have a higher than average take up of school lunches. Finally, the number of secondary school pupils reporting having a school lunch might not reflect the method used for calculating take up in secondary schools.⁶

Table 3. Breakfast and lunch eating habits at baseline

	Male (n=848)		Female (n=1340)		Overall (n=2188)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Breakfast						
Eating before leaving home in the morning	777	91.6	1196	89.3	1973	90.2
Eating on the way to school	94	11.1	110	8.2	204	9.3
At breakfast club	73	8.6	112	8.4	185	8.5
Eating anything at lunchtime	764	90.1	1189	88.8	1953	89.3
Eating a school lunch	403	47.5	562	42.0	965	44.1
Eating a packed lunch from home	432	50.9	711	53.1	1143	52.3
Going home for lunch	17	2.0	44	3.3	61	2.8
Going to the shops for lunch	14	1.7	18	1.3	32	1.5

Base: 2188 (breakfast); Multiple responses allowed for each element (breakfast and lunch)

From the fourth round of the evaluation, members were asked at follow-up as well as at baseline whether they had eaten a school lunch. Although the number of girls having a school lunch showed an increase over time, this was diluted by the results from the final round of the evaluation (when the baseline measurements were typically January to March, with follow-up measures being during the summer term), when the number of boys increased. This may be due to the known seasonal fluctuations in take up of school lunches and there is anecdotal evidence that suggests that pupils prefer packed lunches in the summer to maximise the time they can spend outside at lunch time.

Table 4. Lunch eating habits at exit from programme

	Male (n=374)		Female (n=686)		Overall (n=1060)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Eating anything at lunchtime	354	94.7	651	94.9	1005	94.8
Eating a school lunch (follow-up)	204	54.5	336	49.0	540	50.9
Eating a packed lunch from home	164	43.9	332	48.4	496	46.8
Going home for lunch	15	4.0	16	2.3	31	2.9
Going to the shops for lunch	11	2.9	11	1.6	22	2.1
	<i>Male (n=312)</i>		<i>Female (n=600)</i>		<i>Overall (n=912)</i>	
<i>Eating a school lunch (baseline)*</i>	<i>172</i>	<i>54.8</i>	<i>280</i>	<i>46.8</i>	<i>452</i>	<i>49.6</i>
<i>Eating a school lunch (follow-up)*</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>55.1</i>	<i>292</i>	<i>48.8</i>	<i>465</i>	<i>51.0</i>

Base: 1060 (data from Round 4 and round 5 evaluation only)

*Base 912: those who responded to this question at both time points for direct comparison

4.2.2 Learning and replicating skills

Participants were asked to indicate which skills had been learned at the club and which had been used at home since learning it at the club. All but three of the 2004 participants who completed a follow-up questionnaire reported doing at least one skill during the club activities. Of these, 1841 (92%) reported using at least one skill at home. Of these, however, only 1500 (81%) reported showing this skill to anyone at home although 1567 (85%) subsequently reported the number of people to whom a skill was shown at home.

Table 5 shows that 'Following a recipe' and 'Cutting, chopping or slicing food' were the most likely to have been learned whilst, in general, 'Cutting, chopping or slicing food', 'Combining or mixing ingredients' and 'Following a recipe' were most likely to have been replicated at home. When compared with the numbers who reported learning a skill at the club, washing fruit or vegetables, and grating were the two skills most likely to have been replicated at home. These are arguably the two most straight-forward skills and children might feel confident to offer to do these to help an adult at home.

Although the numbers of participants reporting replicating 'Simmering or boiling', 'Grating' or 'Frying or stir frying' at home were almost as high as the number that had learned the skill at the club (in contrast to the other skills in which markedly fewer replicated it than learned it at the club), this may indicate that participants were practising existing skills (particularly since these two are activities with which they might be familiar as everyday type cooking skills done in the home) even though they were not explicitly taught at the club. While this might not be considered a direct learning outcome of Let's Get Cooking, any engagement with cooking at home can be considered a positive outcome of the programme.

Table 5. Skills learned and replicated by participants

	Learned at the club		Replicated at home		
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%*	% **
Follow a recipe	1924	96.0	1558	81.0	84.6
Weigh or count ingredients	1816	90.6	1504	82.8	81.7
Wash fruit or vegetables	1557	77.7	1500	96.3	81.5
Peel (e.g. potato, apple)	1610	80.3	1450	90.1	78.8
Cut, chop or slice food	1910	95.3	1621	84.9	88.0
Grate (e.g. cheese, carrot)	1481	73.9	1417	95.7	77.0
Combine or mix ingredients	1884	94.0	1559	82.7	84.7
Bake (e.g. muffins, crumble)	1667	83.2	1440	86.4	78.2
Simmer or boil (e.g. eggs, potato)	1114	55.6	1078	96.8	58.6
Fry or stir fry (e.g. onion, vegetable)	1194	59.6	1079	90.4	58.6

Base: 2004 for learning

*As a percent of those who reported learning the skill at the club

**As a percentage of the 1841 who replicated at least one skill at home

4.2.3 Passing knowledge to others

Of the 1841 participants who replicated at least one skill at home, 81% (1495; 63% of whom were girls) reported showing at least one skill to at least one other person (Table 6). In total the skills were shown to 2427 other people, which is an average of 1.6 people shown per club member who reported showing the skills to someone else. When this is computed for all 2004 participants who completed a follow-up questionnaire (including those who did not replicate any skill at home but reported showing a skill to one other person, and those who reported not showing a replicated skill to anyone but subsequently reported the number of people shown the skill) each club member passed their skills to just over one (1.22) additional person. This number can be extrapolated to estimate the total number of beneficiaries of the Let's Get Cooking programme by multiplying the total number of active participants reported in the regular routine club reports by 1.22.

Table 6. Number of people to whom skills are shown

<i>For only participants who reported showing a skill to someone</i>			
	Male (n=530)	Female (n=943)	Overall (n=1495)*
Total number who were shown skills [‡]	839	1550	2427*
Mean number per club member who reported showing the skills to others	1.58	1.64	1.62
Standard deviation	1.2	1.2	1.2
Range	1 to 11	1 to 11	1 to 11
<i>For all participants who responded to the follow-up questionnaire</i>			
	Male (n=756)	Female (n=1213)	Overall (n=2004)* ††
Total number who were shown skills [†]	839	1560	2437**
Mean number per all club members	1.11	1.30	1.22
Standard deviation	1.2	1.2	1.2
Range	0 to 11	0 to 11	0 to 11

Base =1495 / 2004

*Total number of participants showing skills to others including those for whom sex was unknown

**Total number shown skills by participants including those for whom sex was unknown

‡ Total number of people shown skills by club members who reported showing someone else the skill

† By all club members who responded to the follow-up questionnaire, including all those who had apparently not shown the skill to anyone at home but had subsequently reported how many had been shown

†† By all club members who responded to the follow-up questionnaire, including those who had not shown the skill to anyone at home and those whose sex was unknown

4.2.4 Eating habits

The difference between the number of 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' items reported to be eaten at each time point was computed, where a positive score indicates more 'healthy' than 'unhealthy' items being eaten at that time. The difference between these two scores indicates the change in this difference over time with a positive score indicating an increase in the relative number of 'healthy' items consumed over time and where a larger score indicates greater improvement.

Of the 1740 participants who completed questionnaires at both baseline and follow-up, slightly more participants had a score indicating consumption of more 'healthy' than 'unhealthy' items at follow-up compared with baseline (1586 at follow-up compared with 1532 at baseline).^b Over half (1011, 58.0%) showed at least minimal improvement (an increase in the difference score between the two time points of at least one item) after participating in club activities, of which 163 (9% of all who completed both questionnaires or 16% of those who showed any improvement) showed substantial improvement by increasing the difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' items by at least ten points after club participation. Although the length of the club series varied considerably, this was not associated with any change in eating habit.

^b Note that the number of 'healthy' items and 'less healthy' items in the tick list was not equal; this comparison simply shows the shift of the ratio of the two categories of items.

Table 7. Number of healthy and unhealthy items eaten at each time point

	Baseline			Exit from programme			Change from baseline to exit
	'Healthy'	'Unhealthy'	Difference	'Healthy'	'Unhealthy'	Difference	
Mean	12.5	5.7	6.8	15.2	6.6	8.6	1.8
SD	6.1	3.2	5.6	7.0	3.4	6.4	6.0
Median	12.0	5.0	6.0	15.0	6.0	8.0	2.0
Range	0 to 38	0 to 16	-12 to 29	0 to 39	0 to 16	-10 to 29	-24 to 27
N participants with a positive difference			* 1532			* 1586	** 1011

Base = 1740

* Indicates the number of participants who reported eating more 'healthy' than unhealthy items at each time point

** Indicates an improvement defined as an increase in the difference score between the two time points of at least one

Compared with males, females eat relatively more 'healthy' than 'less healthy' items at baseline and at follow-up. However, both groups make similar positive changes to their diet after participation in club activities (Table 8).

Table 8. Mean (sd) changes in scores between baseline and exit from programme

	Male (n=664)	Female (n=1076)	F [†]	p
The number of healthy items minus the number of less healthy items at baseline	6.3 (5.7)	7.0 (5.5)	4.1	0.02
The number of healthy items minus the number of less healthy items at follow-up	7.9 (6.7)	9.0 (6.2)	7.55	0.00
Change in healthy score between baseline and follow-up with positive being an improvement	2.6 (7.0)	2.8 (6.1)	0.64	0.53
Change in unhealthy score between baseline and follow-up with positive being a decline	1.0 (3.4)	0.8 (3.3)	0.91	0.40
Change in the relative score* with a higher positive number being a greater improvement	1.6 (6.4)	2.0 (5.8)	1.15	0.32

Base numbers: 1740

[†] Adjusted for length of club

*Relative score calculated as the difference between the change in healthy score between the time points minus the change in unhealthy score between the time points

Another way of looking at this is presented in Table 9 which indicates that there is a significant increase in the mean number of 'healthy' food items eaten after participation in club activities (15.2 items after participation compared with 12.5 items prior to participation; $p < 0.001$). The ratio of less healthy to healthy items is also greater at follow-up compared with baseline (8.6 at follow-up compared with 6.8 at baseline; $p < 0.001$), providing evidence of a beneficial shift in eating habits after participating in club activities. The benefit was as likely to have occurred in males as it was in females and was not associated with the length of the club series.

Table 9. Mean (sd) food scores at baseline and exit from programme

	Male (n=664)			Female (n=1076)			Overall (n=1740)		
	Baseline	Follow-up	Change	Baseline	Follow-up	Change	Baseline	Follow-up	Change
Healthy	12.2 (6.3)	14.8 (7.6)	2.6 (7.0)	12.6 (5.8)	15.4 (6.8)	2.8 (6.1)	12.5 (6.1)	15.2 (7.1)	2.7 (6.4)
Unhealthy	5.9 (3.3)	7.0 (3.4)	1.0 (3.4)	5.6 (3.1)	6.4 (3.4)	0.8 (3.3)	5.7 (3.2)	6.6 (3.4)	0.9 (3.3)
Healthy – unhealthy*	6.3 (5.7)	7.9 (6.7)	1.6 (6.4)	7.1 (5.5)	9.0 (6.2)	2.0 (5.8)	6.8 (5.6)	8.6 (6.4)	1.8 (6.0)**

Base numbers: 1740

* A positive value indicates relatively more 'healthy' than 'unhealthy' foods eaten. The greater the value, the greater is the difference between food types.

**A positive change indicates a positive increase in the relative difference in food types between time points.

4.3 Evaluation at three months

Three month follow-up questionnaires were returned by 445 participants of whom 357 (from 44 clubs) had completed the evaluation on the two previous occasions. This subset was used to produce the following tables and results.

4.3.1 Breakfast and lunchtime eating habits

Although the majority (87%) reported eating something at lunch time, this was a lower proportion than at baseline. Likewise, fewer participants (45%) reported eating a school lunch than on either previous occasion although this is still higher than the latest national take up of school lunches.⁵ The lower take up of school lunches in this sub-set compared with the main findings might reflect a seasonality effect; the three month follow-up questionnaires were completed during the summer term when take up of school lunches declines during the summer term in favour of packed lunches.

Evidence from the restricted subset of 445 participants suggests that participating in Let's Get Cooking is associated with a sustained increase in take up of school lunches, from 44.0% at baseline to 44.4% at the end of the programme. By three months this had further increased to 44.8%. The increase was particularly apparent in females in which take up increased by 3.5 percentage points to 45.0%. The decrease seen in males might be explained by a 'seasonality' effect, with boys being especially keen to maximise time spent outside during the summer months.

Table 10. Lunch eating habits

	Male (n=128)		Female (n=103)		Overall (n=357)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Eating a school lunch (baseline)*	62	48.4	95	41.5	157	44.0
Eating a school lunch (end of programme)*	60	47.2	98	42.8	158	44.8
Eating a school lunch (3 month follow-up)*	57	44.5	103	45.0	160	44.8

Base: 357

4.3.2 Learning and replicating skills and passing knowledge to others

Results at the end of the programmes using just this subset were similar to the more general findings. At exit from the programme all 357 participants reported using at least one skill during the club activities. Of these, 330 (92%) had replicated at least one skill at home during the period at which they were involved in club activities and 326 (91%) reported using at least one skill at home during the intervening three months.

The skills most frequently replicated at home while still attending the club were cutting or chopping food and following a recipe. These were also most frequently reported as being done at home during the three months after participating in the club activities (Table 11). With the exception of simmering and stir frying, all skills had been replicated by about one third of the subset within the previous two weeks. Simmering and stir frying tend to be used to prepare main meals and may be less popular than baking cakes or puddings. Even so, about one quarter of those who reported replicating a skill had used at least one of these skills during the previous two weeks.

Table 11. Skills learned and replicated by participants

	Learned at the club		Replicated at home			
	Exit %	3 mth FU %	Exit %*	Exit %**	3 mth FU %†	3 mth FU %**
Follow a recipe	96.6	97.2	82.6	86.4	78.4	83.4
Weigh or count ingredients	91.9	94.7	84.1	83.6	79.0	81.9
Wash fruit or vegetables	78.2	76.2	97.8	82.7	98.2	81.9
Peel (e.g. potato, apple)	86.0	88.0	87.3	81.2	79.9	77.0
Cut, chop or slice food	97.5	97.2	84.2	88.8	81.6	86.8
Grate (e.g. cheese, carrot)	79.8	83.5	92.3	79.7	83.6	76.4
Combine or mix ingredients	93.0	93.6	84.0	84.5	81.4	83.4
Bake (e.g. muffins, crumble)	78.7	91.3	95.7	81.5	82.5	82.5
Simmer or boil (e.g. eggs, potato)	96.6	54.9	85.0	56.7	93.9	56.4
Fry or stir fry (e.g. onion, vegetable)	91.9	64.4	82.6	60.6	79.6	56.1

Base: 357

*As a per cent of those who reported learning the skill at the club when asked at the end of the programme

† As a per cent of those who reported learning the skill at the club when after three months

**As a percentage of the 330 who replicated at least one skill at home while attending the club

**As a percentage of the 326 who replicated at least one skill at home since attending the club

4.3.3 Eating habits

Results from the restricted number of participants showed a similar trend to the main results. There was a slight increase in the number of participants with a score indicating consumption of more 'healthy' than 'unhealthy' items at follow-up compared with baseline (335 at follow-up compared with 328 at baseline).^a Although this trend was not seen after three months, there was a small positive increase (0.25) in the relative change of healthy to unhealthy items from baseline (Table 12). Although the equivalent change from baseline to exit from the programme was 1.6 items, any sustained improvement after completion of a programme, rather than a return to baseline values, can be considered to be indicative of continued success. Almost half (161; 45%) were eating relatively more healthy items after three months than they were at baseline.

Table 12. Number of healthy and unhealthy items eaten at each time point

	Baseline			End of programme			Change from baseline to exit	3 mth follow-up			Change from baseline to 3 mth FU
	'Healthy'	'Unhealthy'	Difference	'Healthy'	'Unhealthy'	Difference		'Healthy'	'Unhealthy'	Difference	
Mean	12.4	5.5	6.9	14.6	6.1	8.4	1.6	14.1	7.0	7.1	0.25
SD	5.9	3.2	5.4	6.9	3.3	6.1	5.5	6.3	3.2	6.2	6.1
Median	12.0	5.0	6.0	14.0	6.0	8.0	1	13.0	7.0	7.0	0
Range	2 to 38	0 to 16	-10 to 26	0 to 36	0 to 16	-10 to 28	-18 to 21	2 to 36	0 to 16	-9 to 29	-26 to 19
N participants with a positive difference			*328			*335	*237			*324	*190

Base = 357

* Indicates the number of participants who reported eating more 'healthy' than unhealthy items at each time point

** Indicates an improvement defined as an increase in the difference score between the two time points of at least one

^a Note that the number of 'healthy' items and 'less healthy' items in the tick list was not equal; this comparison simply shows the shift of the ratio of the two categories of items.

4.3.4 Messages remembered by participants

Participants were asked what they had remembered most during their involvement with Let's Get Cooking clubs. Participants had obviously remembered a great deal of the information that they had been told whilst participating in Let's Get Cooking activities, suggesting that the club sessions had a great impact on them. There were many mentions of safety aspects and how to cut and chop correctly. Skill acquisition and safety featured more prominently than actual cooking, although participants clearly enjoyed making (and eating) the food. The verbatim quotes included:

“The most important thing that I learnt was about cross contamination, so like if you cut raw fish or meat and you didn't wash your hands the boards or knife and you started cutting vegetables or fruit, it would be bad”

“How to cook healthy and help me and my family, can eat healthy while eating good food”

“How to cook my own tea or lunch recipes”

“The bridge hold. Don't keep on opening the oven. Mix food well. To weigh stuff accurately. Claw grip. Keep checking the oven, but not to much”

“How to stay safe in the kitchen. To wash your hands before touching food. I had fun and liked trying the food”

“I liked cooking different things. I learnt how to grate cheese and how to rub in and cream stuff together”

“Be careful with knives because you don't want to cut yourself (dangerous)”

“The most important thing I learnt was peeling vegetables. The thing I remember most is the mixing”

“You need to love to grow plants and you need to follow instructions to get it right. I learnt this all with an amazing cook”

“To always peel and cut away from you”

“The most important was how to crack an egg without getting shell in it since I used to always get some shell in it”

“I learned how to cut properly using the technique the bridge and the claw. Also I learned to be safe while cooking because you might have hurt yourself”

“Yes the most important was learning how to cut properly or else something unwanted would have gone in my food”

“That fruit and vegetables can be used to make tasty dishes. How to read and follow a recipe”

“To whisk egg white for making meringue. Using different food to create healthy dishes”

This limited selection shows the impact the activities had on the participants. Three months is a long period for young children, and it is impressive that, although the majority of participants were from junior schools (aged 7 to 11) they had many memories, all of which were positive.

After coding, the two most popular responses involved 'How to cut/chop (bridge and claw)' and 'Being safe when cooking/use knives carefully'. It is encouraging that two important safety messages featured so highly and it is likely that these will be remembered in the longer term.

Teamwork or the chance to meet and work with new people was also an important outcome for almost one in ten participants and one that may not have been considered at the beginning of the programme. This cannot be underestimated if it helps to improve people's lives or their self-esteem. The health related aspect is clearly important, and even though the message was subtle rather than explicit during the club activities, it was mentioned by a fifth of participants suggesting that less explicit methods are successful in communicating key messages.

Table 13. What was important to participants

	n	%
Safety message	183	56.1
A specific skill (preparation or cooking)	116	35.6
Enjoyed making a specific food item	81	24.8
Health or improved diet or trying new foods	63	19.3
Socialising with different age groups; meeting new people; teamwork	29	8.9
Eating the food or making food at home	16	4.9
Fun; all of it	15	4.6
Others	15	4.6

Base = 326 (Multiple responses allowed)

4.3.5 Evaluation of Let's Get Cooking by participants

Participants were asked at exit from the programme what was most enjoyable about the Let's Get Cooking clubs. The free text responses were coded (Table 16), with the most popular aspect in all waves of the evaluation to date, being learning to cook.

The popularity of some specific activities varies since different activities are run at different times of the year and in different clubs. However, the over-riding conclusion is that participants appear to enjoy the general cooking aspect of the club, including specific skills associated with food preparation. Almost all the participants appeared to enjoy the fun style of Let's Get Cooking clubs while learning new skills.

Table 14. Activities enjoyed by participants (percentage of participants)

	%*
Learning to cook/enjoyed cooking	39.7
Enjoyed making the muffins	5.8
Liked experiencing/learning new things	16.1
Enjoyed being with my friends	4.9
Enjoyed making the smoothies	2.8
Teamwork	2.5
Enjoyed tasting the cheese	0.1
It was fun	9.1
Could take home what we made	3.3
Liked making the pancakes	1.2
Liked making the flapjacks	0.5
Enjoyed the chopping/stirring/cutting/peeling	10.8
Enjoyed eating/tasting the food	18.2
Enjoyed making the cakes	2.4
Like/enjoyed everything/all of it	8.5
Left to do it ourselves/work alone	1.8
Enjoyed making lamb-burgers	0.1

Enjoyed making the pizza	4.3
Enjoyed making the scones	3.1
Enjoyed washing/tidying up	0.1
Enjoyed making the shortbread	0.4
Enjoyed making the soup	0.7
Can try out recipes at home	2.9
Making new friends/meeting new people	1.8
Enjoyed making the [apple] crumble	2.4
Enjoyed using/making things with fruit	1.2
Enjoyed kneading dough	0.4
Enjoyed making the cookies	1.0
Other**	15.5

* The percentage of participants who submitted a comment and who mentioned the item. Base numbers not given as participants frequently mentioned multiple

** Each activity mentioned by only one or two participants

Some of the actual responses from across all rounds of the evaluation included:

"I've enjoyed working with other people. Sharing with other people made me improve on reasoning with others."

"I enjoyed all of it. It taught me lots of things like how to cream food and weighing food. I loved it. It was fun."

"I loved everything, especially the cooking."

"I enjoyed making the potato salad because it was so simple to make yet so tasty."

"I enjoy doing something I love with my friends. I like learning the skills and trying out new recipes. I love it!"

Some of the comments during each round of evaluation came from adult helpers and included:

"It is a fun and exciting way to teach children healthy recipes that we remember at home. I love eating our creations. The fajitas were lovely!"

"Having fun with the children watching them as they learn new skills and techniques."

"Seeing the children cook and enjoy themselves."

"Enjoyed joining in with the children, it has been fun."

"It is fun, helps kids to learn to cook."

Comments have also included some from adult participants, who were just as enthusiastic as the younger participants:

"I have enjoyed making all of and co-operating. I loved all the activities as well."

"It's healthy, it's fun and it's interesting."

"You can learn, is fun, is good and nice."

"I have enjoyed making different food."

"I have enjoyed the cooking and doing something enjoyable and educational with my son."

"The group as a whole. Well put together. Great leadership and well explained."

"Nice to do things with my daughter."

As clubs became more established, it was particularly encouraging that previous participants were returning as volunteer helpers:

"I've liked working with the year 4 children and helping set up 'Let's get Cooking' to provide the children with their food." (This young man participated in the Club last year and enjoyed it so much that he is back this term as a voluntary helper).

Appendix 2 details further comments received from participants in each of the five rounds of evaluation.

4.4 Evaluation of infant aged participants

Of the 465 infant aged children (Key stage 1, age range 5 to 7 years)^a who participated in the evaluation, 335 completed both the baseline and follow-up evaluation sessions. In addition, 79 children provided only baseline data and a further 51 provided only data at the follow-up session. There was no difference in the mean number of foods eaten by children at the two time points (mean number of items: 11.9, sd 2.2 at baseline compared with 12.0, sd 2.2 at follow-up; $p= 0.202$).

The data do, however, seem to support the trend towards eating more of the listed foods after participating in club activities (Table 157). In particular, more children reported eating bananas, peas and tomatoes after taking part in club activities. Although the increase did not reach statistical significance, it was encouraging that the difference overall tended towards a positive change. However, given the limited recall ability of young children, the results should be viewed with caution. Whether any increase was due to a real increase in consumption of these items, or was due to improved recognition of the items as a result of exposure during the club activities is unclear. Since food awareness is an important aspect of learning healthy eating habits in young children, an improvement in recognition after participation can still be considered a positive outcome since this is more likely to lead to a more varied diet with previously unfamiliar (and 'healthier') foods being eaten at a later date.

^a This includes some older children with special education needs for whom the picture card sort task was considered, by the club co-ordinators, to be the more appropriate method of evaluation

Table 15. The number and percentage of infant participants reporting having eaten a range of foods by time of visit

	Females (n=179)		Baseline Males (n=156)		Total (n=335)		Females (n=148)		Follow-up Males (n=131)		Total (n=279)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Apple	168	93.9	149	95.5	317	94.6	171	95.5	146	93.6	317	94.6
Banana	156	87.2	135	86.5	291	86.9	164	91.6	139	89.1	303	90.4
Broccoli	138	77.1	124	79.5	262	78.2	139	77.7	123	78.8	262	78.2
Brown Bread	138	77.1	121	77.6	259	77.3	140	78.2	126	80.8	266	79.4
Carrot	156	87.2	140	89.7	296	88.4	156	87.2	136	87.2	292	87.2
Fruit Juice	163	91.1	149	95.5	312	93.1	168	93.9	147	94.2	315	94.0
Grapes	167	93.3	145	92.9	312	93.1	173	96.6	140	89.7	313	93.4
Milk	164	91.6	140	89.7	304	90.7	168	93.9	139	89.1	307	91.6
Pasta	165	92.2	144	92.3	309	92.2	164	91.6	140	89.7	304	90.7
Peas	131	73.2	113	72.4	244	72.8	133	74.3	118	75.6	251	74.9
Rice	148	82.7	129	82.7	277	82.7	152	84.9	129	82.7	281	83.9
Strawberries	165	92.2	129	82.7	294	87.8	162	90.5	131	84.0	293	87.5
Tomato	113	63.1	86	55.1	199	59.4	118	65.9	93	59.6	211	63.0
Water	165	92.2	154	98.7	319	95.2	168	93.9	150	96.2	318	94.9

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Let's Get Cooking is a school-based programme that enables participants to acquire, in a fun environment, important skills that will be of benefit through life. Not only do club members gain healthy eating and cooking skills, there is also tentative evidence that they are more likely to have a school lunch after participating in club activities. Since 2008, food served in schools has had to conform to both food-based and nutrient-based standards⁷, a move which not only ensures that pupils benefit from a healthy and nutritious meal at lunch time, but feedback from teachers suggests that the changes in the food provided help bring about better behaviour and performance in the classroom.

The evaluation of the specified outcomes is equally encouraging. Overall 92% of participants reported practising their skills at home, with 81% of these showing their skills to someone else. Participants are also significantly likely to eat an increased number of 'healthy' food items after participating in club activities, with girls and boys equally likely to show improvement and, although attenuated, this trend continues three months after completion of club activities. Many of the skills learnt at the club are used at home, both while participants are still attending the club and in the three months following participation. As well as cooking skills, health and hygiene messages relating to cooking are remembered particularly well.

Headline figures relating to BIG objectives (including those relating to Outcome 1 which are derived from routine on-line reporting):

Outcome 1 – acquiring new food preparation or cooking skills enabling participants to prepare healthier food

By the end of the 5-year programme 1,106,300 children, family members and members of the local community will increase their food preparation or cooking skills as a result of Let's Get Cooking.

Total number of club members taken from online activity reports	574,318
Number of 'home' beneficiaries (based on finding that for every 100 Let's Get Cooking club members, there are an additional 122 people who have developed their food preparation / cooking skills with the club members at home.)	700,667
Number of people cooking at community events taken from online activity reports	498,985

Total number of beneficiaries to date (January 2012) 1,773,970

Outcome 2 – replicating learned food or cooking skills

70% of participants who learn a new healthy eating skill through Let's Get Cooking will replicate that skill at home

Percentage of clubs members who reported practising their skills at home 92.0%

Objective 3 – nutritional intake

50% of children, young people and families who participate in Let's Get Cooking will increase their intake of nutritionally healthy food.

Percentage of clubs members who have increased their intake of healthy food **58.0%**

The results from this cumulative evaluation are encouraging and are consistent with those found using data from earlier rounds of the evaluation.

Appendix 1: final versions of the questionnaires

Copies of final versions of the questionnaires

1st Visit

Club ID Number:

Participant Number

QUESTIONNAIRE

We are asking you to complete this questionnaire so that we can find out how Let's Get Cooking affects you. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. We won't share your answers with anybody else. There are no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your answers.

Please answer all the questions by putting an "X" in the appropriate box. If you make a mistake, just blank out the mistake like this ■ and carry on. If you feel an answer is not applicable please leave the section blank.

First, some simple questions about you.

Q. How old are you? **INSERT NUMBER OF YEARS**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Q. Are you a boy or a girl?

Boy

Girl

SECTION A

Please think about today when you answer these questions.

Q. <u>Today</u> , did you have anything to eat or drink:		
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO	Yes	No
Before leaving home in the morning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On the way to school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At Breakfast Club?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. <u>Today</u> , did you:		
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO	Yes	No
Eat anything for lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a school lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a packed lunch from home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go home for you lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to the shops for lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION B

Please think about yesterday and today when you answer these questions.

Q. Did you eat any of these foods yesterday or today (even if it was only a little)? PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO FOR EACH FOOD		
Fruit	Yes	No
Banana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pineapple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orange, Satsuma, tangerine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peach, nectarine, plum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strawberries, raspberries, other berries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dried fruit... like raisins, dried apricots, dried banana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit salad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other fruit – fresh or tinned	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vegetables and salad	Yes	No
Tomatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cucumber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other salad... like lettuce, peppers, celery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peas, green beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet corn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baked beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red kidney beans, pinto beans, butter beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chick peas or lentils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potatoes	Yes	No
Mashed or boiled potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baked or jacketed potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roast potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chips or oven chips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potato shapes... like Smiley Faces, Alphabites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cereals	Yes	No
Cereals... Like Corn Flakes, Bran Flakes, Weetabix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet cereals... like Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops, Frosties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muesli or porridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bread	Yes	No
White bread or toast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brown or wholemeal bread or toast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pita bread, baguette, bagel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chapatti, naan bread, garlic bread	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pasta and rice	Yes	No
Pasta or spaghetti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Couscous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meat and fish	Yes	No
Chicken or turkey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sausages, burgers, chicken nuggets, sausage roll	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mackerel, haddock, cod, tuna, salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish fingers or battered fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other meat or fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desserts and puddings	Yes	No
Any cake or pudding with fruit... like fruit cake, fruit pie, fruit crumble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any cake or pudding without fruit... like chocolate cake, Victoria sponge, flapjack, jam tart, doughnut, rice pudding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ice cream, cream, custard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snack foods	Yes	No
Chocolate bar or any other chocolate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biscuits or cookies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crisps (any flavour)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinks	Yes	No
Fizzy drinks... like Coca Cola, lemonade, Fanta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squash or cordial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit juice or fruit smoothie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water from bottle or tap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milk or Soya milk – not flavoured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other drinks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. Did you add salt to any of your food yesterday or today?
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO

Yes

No

Q. Did you add sugar to any of your food or drinks yesterday or today?
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO

Yes

No

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Please hand it back to the researcher. We will use your answers in our research.

2nd Visit (v2)

Club ID Number:

Participant Number

QUESTIONNAIRE

We are asking you to complete this questionnaire so that we can find out how Let's Get Cooking affects you. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. We won't share your answers with anybody else. There are no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your answers.

Please answer all the questions by putting an "X" in the appropriate box. If you make a mistake, just blank out the mistake like this and carry on. If you feel an answer is not applicable please leave the section blank.

First, some simple questions about you.

Q. How old are you? **INSERT NUMBER OF YEARS**

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Q. Are you a boy or a girl?

Boy

Girl

SECTION A

This section is about the skills you have learned at the cooking club.

Q. Have you done any of these skills at the club ?	Yes	No
PLEASE 'X' ONE BOX FOR EACH SKILL		
Follow a recipe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weight or count ingredients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash fruit or vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peel (e.g. potato, apple)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut, chop or slice food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grate (e.g. cheese, carrot)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combine or mix ingredients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bake (e.g. muffins, crumble)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simmer or boil (e.g. eggs, potato)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fry or stir fry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. Have used any of these skills at home since learning them at the club?		
PLEASE 'X' ONE BOX FOR EACH SKILL	Yes	No
Follow a recipe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weight or count ingredients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash fruit or vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peel (e.g. potato, apple)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut, chop or slice food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grate (e.g. cheese, carrot)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combine or mix ingredients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bake (e.g. muffins, crumble)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simmer or boil (e.g. eggs, potato)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fry or stir fry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. Was anyone else (family or friends) watching or helping you when you used these skills at home?

Yes No

Q. If you said yes to the last question, how many people (family or friends) were watching or helping you?

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SECTION B

Please think about yesterday and today when you answer these questions.

Q. Did you eat any of these foods yesterday or today (even if it was only a little)? PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO FOR EACH FOOD		
Fruit	Yes	No
Banana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pineapple	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orange, satsuma, tangerine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peach, nectarine, plum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strawberries, raspberries, other berries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dried fruit... like raisins, dried apricots, dried banana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit salad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other fruit – fresh or tinned	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vegetables and salad	Yes	No
Tomatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cucumber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other salad... like lettuce, peppers, celery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peas, green beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet corn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baked beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red kidney beans, pinto beans, butter beans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chick peas or lentils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Potatoes	Yes	No
Mashed or boiled potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baked or jacked potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roast potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chips or oven chips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potato shapes... like Smiley Faces, Alphabites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cereals	Yes	No
Cereals... Like Corn Flakes, Bran Flakes, Weetabix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet cereals... like Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops, Frosties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muesli or porridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bread	Yes	No
White bread or toast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brown or wholemeal bread or toast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pita bread, baguette, bagel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chapatti, naan bread, garlic bread	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pasta and rice	Yes	No
Pasta or spaghetti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Couscous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meat and fish	Yes	No
Chicken or turkey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sausages, burgers, chicken nuggets, sausage roll	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mackerel, haddock, cod, tuna, salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish fingers or battered fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other meat or fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desserts and puddings	Yes	No
Any cake or pudding with fruit... like fruit cake, fruit pie, fruit crumble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any cake or pudding without fruit... like chocolate cake, Victoria sponge, flapjack, jam tart, doughnut, rice pudding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ice cream, cream, custard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snack foods	Yes	No
Chocolate bar or any other chocolate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biscuits or cookies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crisps (any flavour)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinks	Yes	No
Fizzy drinks... like Coca Cola, Lemonade, Fanta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squash or cordial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit juice or fruit smoothie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water from bottle or tap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milk or Soya milk – not flavoured	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other drinks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. Did you add salt to any of your food yesterday or today?
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO

Yes

No

Q. Did you add sugar to any of your food or drinks yesterday or today?
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO

Yes

No

Q. Today, did you:		
PLEASE 'X' EITHER YES OR NO	Yes	No
Eat anything for lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a school lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eat a packed lunch from home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go home for you lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to the shops for lunch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q. Finally, what have you enjoyed most about the Let's Get Cooking club?
PLEASE WRITE IN BOX

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Please hand it back in to the researcher. We will use your answers in our research.

Appendix 2: a selection of comments from all rounds of the evaluation

Participants were asked at exit from the programme what was most enjoyable about the Lets' Get Cooking clubs. A selection of responses from each round of the evaluation are detailed below:

Round 1 evaluation

- *The cooking because some things I have not cooked before and I liked finding out what we were going to make*
- *Just the range of food we cook.*
- *Everyone can do the cooking.*
- *That we could take our food home.*
- *That the food was healthy*
- *Learning stuff that adults do.*
- *That we get to do different activities and learn new things.*
- *The fun environment. That we get to take home what we make.*
- *Cooking the muffins.*

The only negative response was *"I don't like that we can't choose what recipes we do"*.

Round 2 evaluation

- *I liked the weighing.*
- *I like baking and learning new skills.*
- *Learning how to cook, getting my Nan to try new foods*
- *It is good. You get to learn different techniques and you get to make different things that you would have never tried before.*
- *Because you learn how to try and make different things and use different techniques to make things I have never tried before.*
- *I have enjoyed cooking different things. It is very good and helpful for you when you are older.*
- *You can learn how to cook and learn how to chop into slices. Also I have made friends.*
- *Making shortbread, making muffins, washing up and making fruit cakes.*
- *I enjoyed mixing and breaking eggs. I liked kneading and chopping.*
- *I really enjoyed it and would love to do it again. It was a great opportunity!*
- *That I am good at cooking. Also this will help me cook in the future.*
- *Mixing, cutting, trying the food.*
- *I enjoyed using the recipes at home.*
- *Being able to work with more responsibility and freedom.*
- *Actually doing things and learning about different food. Having fun - it's really fun cooking. The experience is really good. Just me doing it rather than just watching adults show you how. It is good.*
- *Cooking - actually making things.*

- *Everything (but I loved the muffin) but not the cheese and chive (yuk!)*
- *That you get to cook. Practising washing up is fun.*
- *I've enjoyed working with other people. Sharing with other people made me improve on reasoning with others.*
- *I enjoyed all of it. It taught me lots of things like how to cream food and weighing food. I loved it. It was fun.*
- *I loved everything, especially the cooking.*

Round 3 evaluation

Comments received in this round continued to reinforce the findings that participants value the chance to learn about diet and nutrition as well as cooking. Many of them mentioned that they enjoyed the 'learning' aspect as well as the more predictable aspect of eating and enjoying the food that they have cooked.

Participants are completely free to make any comment so it is particularly pleasing that there are hardly any negative comments, and that several mention welcoming the chance to try new foods (such as cucumber) and cook dishes that they have never eaten before. Although this is not explicitly measured as an outcome, it is one of the important aims of Let's Get Cooking.

Participants also obviously appreciate the opportunity to take responsibility. Several mentioned the fact that they are not allowed to cook at home and for them the club lets them experience new activities not normally permitted. Mentions of subsequently cooking at home with family members reinforce the more objective outcome (replicating the skill at home) measured in the questionnaire, and the fun element, and being able to cook with friends while meeting new people indicates how much the participants enjoy all the clubs' activities – even the clearing up is mentioned by several.

Only a selection of comments can be included here, but just these few show how popular the clubs are.

- *I like to do some different stuff, rubbing flour together.*
- *I like mixing butter and flour together and mixing stuff together and most of all eating it with my family.*
- *I like 'Let's Get Cooking' because it helps me cook. I like it because my mum likes my cooking, and I like it because I learn to mix and stir.*
- *I enjoyed learning new skills, participating in making food and working in groups.*
- *I have enjoyed learning new recipes and learning how to cook with other people. I also enjoyed learning different ways of eating healthily.*
- *I enjoyed cooking a variety of foods and being put under the pressure of professional chefs.*
- *I have enjoyed everything. I can't choose really!*
- *I enjoyed making the potato salad because it was so simple to make yet so tasty.*

- *I love cooking club because I love cooking. My nan helps me every Saturday.*
- *I like getting to learn lots of recipes and I have lots of fun.*
- *What I enjoy about the cooking club is that we get to use equipment and making stuff.*
- *I like it because when you are older you can go back and cook.*
- *I like because we get to cook and when I am at home my mum mostly cooks so it is fun for me.*
- *I like eating the food and making myself messy.*
- *I've enjoyed the stuff we have done like peeling and cutting. Some things I've done I had never done at all. I especially liked cooking the pizza bagels. They were very nice.*
- *I have learned a lot and I have really enjoyed myself.*
- *Learning new skills to cook with. New food to try like cucumber. It was fun.*
- *Learning the recipes and eating all the healthy food.*
- *Making food that I have never made or tried.*
- *Get to cook things that I don't do at home as dad is chef and does all cooking.*
- *I have asked my mum to buy low fat food now. You get to eat healthy food at the class. It's fun. I like being here.*
- *I have enjoyed learning about different skills that I can use at home, when I am baking our Christmas cake or other things with my mum.*
- *I like grating, my hands messy mixing. I like everything! And I get all the recipes so I can cook at home.*
- *Trying different foods. Learned lots of different ways to cut. I also liked cooking the recipes at home.*
- *Following recipes, taking food home for the family to try.*
- *Cooking all the different foods and finding out that I like other foods.*
- *Teaches me for when I am older to chop and cook for my children*
- *We get to cook, not just help.*
- *I have a wonderful teacher, she teaches me cooking.*
- *I like learning more about cooking ready for future life. It's also fun just to learn new skills.*
- *Cooking a variety of different foods. It's cool, radical, funky and cool.*
- *Cooking, peeling, grating.*
- *The way that you have a choice and it is much easier to learn at the club.*
- *I like it because you don't have to be supervised every second. Another thing they can trust you a lot.*
- *Actually being allowed to work in the kitchen.*
- *I enjoyed making the lasagne it was a good experience and I can make it at home for my family.*
- *Actually getting to cook because I hardly ever get to cook.*
- *I just enjoy almost everything. I don't know where to start mentioning*
- *Learning how to cook. I am not allowed in the kitchen at home so it gives me an opportunity to learn how to cook. It is fun.*

- *Because it gives me the opportunity to learn new food skills. It counts for my D of E and I get to eat the food.*
- *Doing it with my mum. I love to be able to cook on my own.*
- *Getting to cook on my own and work out how to do the recipe.*
- *Having a laugh with friends and making food.*
- *Tasting the food at the end of cooking.*
- *Learning new skills, cooking, meeting new people, making new recipes.*
- *Cooking without my mum watching over me.*
- *I enjoy doing something I love with my friends. I like learning the skills and trying out new recipes. I love it!*

Round 4 evaluation

Comments continued to reinforce all the previous findings that participants value the chance to learn about diet and nutrition as well as cooking.

Each recipe pack focuses on different foods and the inclusion of healthy sandwiches was well received by this group of participants.

Comments about cooking with less sugar and salt are encouraging as this is important for long term health benefits.

The fun aspect of the club continues to be the over-riding theme. When this is combined with the level of responsibility given to participants, and the pride that members have in making food for their family, it is clear that the benefits are more than just cooking and healthy eating. Participants clearly value being with friends as well as making new friends in a different environment.

Some clubs have benefited from visits to professional kitchens through the association with Business in the Community, which have been popular.

The opportunity to try foods not previously eaten is also a recurrent theme, supporting previously unpublished evidence that new foods are more likely to be tried if introduced in a group situation or when others are seen to be eating them.

- *Learning ways to cook food using less salt or sugar*
- *Making muffins, I liked cutting things. Making healthy sandwiches. I liked the smoothies.*
- *I love making buns and pizza. I loved making the sandwich I made, a face, it was fun. I just loved everything.*
- *I like using the implements.*
- *Cooking and learning a lot about food and cooking. I was bad at cooking but now I've improved.*
- *It introduced me to new recipes, for example, I never ate fish but now enjoy making fish pie and fish pate which I would never*

normally eat. Fun making and trying foods and taking them home to show friends and family.

- *Eating what I've cooked. I now enjoy cooking and care about what I'm eating. I've cooked more since starting the lessons than ever before. Overall, it has been very useful!*
- *Learning new skills that will never be forgotten. I can't wait to use and learn more skills to show off what I can do!*
- *Making everything in Let's Get Cooking Club and learning new skills and making new friends.*
- *Being with some of friends and cooking with Beth.*
- *Eating and chopping the food. Thanks its been good and I have looked after the little ones and done lots of new stuff, wish it was [all] the time.*
- *The eating, the getting messy. Meeting new friends.*
- *Get to be a group leader, its good, oh and I get to have sharp knives (mum wouldn't let me have ones like this at home).*
- *I've enjoyed eating the food at home. Making the food with my friends and teachers.*
- *We eat the food we all make and we take the food home sometimes for our families at home. It's yummy scrummy in my tummy!*
- *Learning new cooking skills. Get the recipes, eat the food we made at cooking club, and learning how to cut like bridge and claw, and the word searches, and certificates and stuff like making mixture for pancakes.*
- *Cooking and meeting Rosie.*
- *Cooking, spending time with my mum*
- *The fact that the delicious smells and that when I tasted it I knew I'd helped to create something tasty.*
- *Being with my friends cooking and it was all free!*
- *Having fun with my friends after school whilst also learning new skills.*
- *I have enjoyed my lessons here at the Cooking Club and learnt a lot of skills but at the same time made new friends and had fun!*
- *Making different foods.*
- *I have enjoyed learning new skills and trying new foods.*
- *Being with my friends, cooking things for my family.*
- *Trying loads of new foods I would not eat before.*
- *I have enjoyed the most was cooking the food and surprising my mum with dinner.*
- *It's taught me how to cook a wider range of foods.*
- *When we all worked together and didn't moan.*
- *Working as a family and learning how to cook things different every week.*
- *Everything but mostly the trip to Bordeaux Quay Trip*
- *That we can be with our friends and cook. Get to take it home!*
- *Making pancakes and going to my nans'. I cook with her more.*

Round 5 evaluation

The comments continued to emphasise the enjoyment that taking part in a Let's Get Cooking club can offer.

Although central to many comments is the enjoyment of cooking and eating food, there are many instances where this is linked to wider issues. Several children commented that they shared food with their family, or that they spent time cooking with a sibling, activities which might not have been considered prior to the club. The social aspect is very important to some children and the benefit of this should not be under-estimated.

Similarly, being able to work independently is clearly appreciated, and it is due to the training and subsequent confidence and expertise of the club co-ordinators that this is possible. Exposure to cultural foods is increasingly important not only for children who live in towns and cities with a wide ethnic mix, but also for those who might otherwise not experience such foods until they leave home and are less willing to accept change.

- *Spending time with my sister and learning different things.*
- *I've liked it all because I love cooking. P.S. best lesson ever.*
- *I like food that I wasn't so keen on before such as carrots and strawberries and raspberries.*
- *Working as a team to make things. Trying new things that I'm not allowed to do at home and most of all eating the food and having fun!*
- *I have enjoyed making the food and taking it home for my family to enjoy.*
- *I have enjoyed cooking with my best friends and helping the year 7's.*
- *Learning new recipes. Mixing with younger year. Learning new skills.*
- *You get to investigate and use different foods. You use teamwork and it just is fun.*

The comments received over the course of all the evaluations indicate that not only do children value the experience of being allowed to cook rather than watching a demonstration, but for some it suggests that they discover that it is something that they can actually achieve. Attending the club for these children in particular must help to increase confidence and self-esteem.

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- ⁵ Nelson M, Nicholas J, Riley K, Wood, L and Russell, S. Sixth annual survey of take up of school lunches in England. <http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/school-cooks-caterers/reports/sixth-annual-survey-of-take-up-of-school-meals-in-england>
- ⁶ SFT Annual Survey 2009-2010 Statistical Release – Revised.
<http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/school-cooks-caterers/reports/statistical-release-take-up-of-school-lunches-in-england-2009-2010>
- ⁷ <http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/the-standards>