Gold Food For Life Catering Mark

Report of Catering Services

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**Summary:**

The Food for Life (FFL) Partnership award scheme is a framework to help schools and their communities transform their food culture. FFL Partnership catering teams are committed to serving freshly prepared well sourced food. The scheme works best where there is a good relationship between the school and the catering team.

FFL catering teams demonstrate to parents that we can deliver menus using fresh, seasonal local ingredients, including high welfare meat and sustainable fish.

Barking and Dagenham Catering Services have started on this journey and currently hold the Bronze Food For Life Catering Mark Standard, which is the first step in transforming food culture. The award has many benefits such as a whole school approach to health and sustainability.

We are currently working to ensure that our food and menus are able to achieve the Gold Food For Life Catering Mark Standard.

**Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to support the Catering Service’s plan to work towards The Gold Food For Life Catering Mark Standard.

(i) Support from the CSSC is key to Catering Services achieving success. The Committee’s endorsement sends a strong message to schools that increased involvement would contribute to improved meal uptake and an improved dining experience as well as contributing to Ofsted outcomes and the creative curriculum (outdoor classroom).

(ii) Furthermore, it shows that parents can feel confident that their children are getting a choice of food from a wide range of healthy, fresh meals.
Reasons

Achieving the Gold Food for Life Catering Mark Standard has a positive impact for the following reasons:

- Makes a significant contribution towards a healthy lifestyle making healthy eating easy
- Encourages good decision making resulting in more fruit and vegetables being chosen
- Schools with FFL Gold report awarded Ofsted outstanding
- Improves attainment levels
- Helps close the gap for disadvantaged children
- Good for the local economy utilising local businesses
- Menus are fresh, local, seasonal, taking into account animal welfare
- Commitment to ethical and sustainable sources

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 In achieving the Bronze Food For Life Catering Mark Standard the Catering Service has made significant progress to improve the health and sustainability of our Borough’s food system.

The Gold Food For Life Catering Mark Standard would provide a visible measure of our commitment to improve good practice whilst retaining value for money and would confirm our intention to build on a long term programme to create a healthy and sustainable food legacy.

Now that we have achieved the Bronze Standard, much of the work has already been done and our aim is to apply for gold accreditation during the 2013 autumn term. The main differences between bronze and gold criteria come under the following headings:

- Food leadership and school food culture i.e. setting targets to increase take up of school meals
- Food quality and provenance i.e. introducing organic and additional vegetarian items
- Food Education introducing pupils to growing schemes
- Community and partnerships i.e. parents and the community become actively involved in growing and cooking activities in schools.

1.2 We are committed to working both with our schools and in partnership on menu development with other London boroughs to jointly meet the Gold Food For Life Catering Mark criteria.