

Help us protect English children's school & nursery milk

Milk is very healthy for growing children and many across England are already entitled to it through different schemes. Unfortunately, some of these schemes are under threat and there is a risk of them having a reduced impact. We need your support to:

1. **Raise awareness among settings** about their rights and responsibilities in providing milk.
2. **Safeguard the nursery and the school milk schemes from upcoming changes**
3. Call for **all Key Stage 1 children to have free school milk each day.**

About the School & Nursery Milk Alliance

We are the SNMA, a coalition of organisations from the dairy, health and education sectors, working to champion the benefits to children of drinking milk and to encourage its increased consumption. As a membership organisation, the Alliance represents over 90% of the suppliers of milk to educational settings, as well as 10,500 nurseries, schools and other educational settings receiving milk.

Why milk?



It tackles the modern plight of childhood hunger, obesity and boosts health and cognition

Milk is a natural and healthy option for children. It contains the vitamins and minerals vital for good dental health, bone development, cognition and it also plays a key role in a healthy diet. The benefits of milk make providing it to children essential, particularly in light of increasing rates of childhood dental decay, obesity and hunger.

Encouraging children to drink milk regularly helps them to form a healthy habit when they are young and leads to them making healthier choices throughout their lives. School and nursery milk is a source of safe, healthy nutrition, regardless of their household income.

The prevalence of child hunger reached 2 million in 2020; this is unacceptable. Providing milk in education settings benefits all children, including those from deprived backgrounds who may not otherwise have sufficient access to nutritious food. This in turn helps to improve children's cognitive function as well as their physical health, directly contributing to improving education outcomes.

England has an increasing crisis in child obesity, with approximately 22.6% of primary school starters overweight or obese. Research shows that milk helps to tackle this in a healthy way. Milk is an integral part of a healthy diet for growing bodies, and the fat content in milk is low, with semi-skimmed milk containing just 1.7% fat and whole milk containing 3.9% fat.

Milk is a natural superfood, with research showing that children who drink milk are more likely to have a lower body mass than those who do not, and healthier teeth and bones. Cow's milk contains the micronutrients that reduce tooth decay, the primary reason for child A&E admissions in England, bleeding gums and mouth sores, such as calcium, vitamin B3 (niacin), and vitamin B12 and B2 (riboflavin).

It supports British agriculture and the British economy

The British countryside and British farmers benefit from the provision of milk to children. School milk is a British institution, which supports the livelihood of many dairy farmers by providing a much-needed market that doubles

up as a social good. It supports farmers to be productive whilst empowering them to better manage risk and volatility, and to be robust in the face of future shocks.

Our Aims

The UK Government recognises the importance of milk, as acknowledged by the Department for Education-authored **School Food Standards** for England. These standards give education settings a statutory obligation to 'make milk available to pupils everyday'. We need to make sure this commitment continues to inform policy and children's diets in school.

- **Nursery Milk Scheme** is a Department of Health and Social Care funded scheme through which all children under five years old, who attend an early years setting for two or more hours a day, are entitled to a free daily one-third of a pint portion of milk. It is worth £49.3 million a year to English children.

We call for this scheme to be safeguarded and promoted among early years providers.

- **EU School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme** is worth £2, 368, 903.72 in Government funds for England in 2019/20, currently a European Union aid scheme paying 2.4p per 250ml, administered and topped up 1p per 250ml by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It entitles all children over the age of five to receive a subsidised portion of milk. The government has committed to covering the costs of the scheme in England from when we leave the EU until a UK-tailored scheme is devised.

We welcome the government's commitment to fund the intermediary provision of school milk, and call for it to implement an ambitious domestic scheme to give all Key Stage 1 children access to a free portion of milk each day, and continue to subsidised milk for KS2.

How you can support

1. Meet with us

Arrange a meeting with us to discuss how you can help support your constituency's children continue to access the school milk they're entitled to, and have a photo with Dr Hilary Jones showing your support.

E-mail: snma@snma.org.uk

2. Sign up as a Parliamentary Member

Membership is free for Parliamentarians and you will be listed on our website as a supporter of the Alliance. You will receive a monthly update on our activities and campaigns and invitations to attend when are holding events in Westminster.

Sign up here: <http://www.snma.org.uk/support-school-milk>



"Milk is a vital source of nutrition for growing children, and providing it in education settings makes sure all children get to reap the benefits of this natural superfood. I call on the government to do everything it can to ensure children get the milk they're entitled to, and therefore its associated the health and cognitive advantages."

Dr Hilary Jones, Spokesperson for the Alliance