





A HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURE





**Anna Taylor**  
Food Foundation  
Executive Director

# Inquiry Committee Members



**Sharon Hodgson MP  
(Co-Chair)**



**Alison Garnham**



**Pauline Leeson**



**Bruce Adamson**



**Roberta Blackman-Wood  
MP**



**Dr Philippa Whitford  
MP (Co-Chair)**



**Kerry McCarthy MP**



**The Lord Bishop of  
Durham**



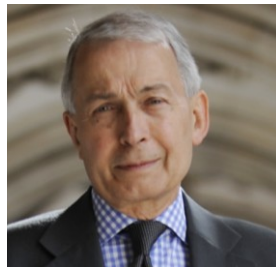
**Ruth Smeeth MP**



**Anne-Marie Trevelyan  
MP**



**Ian Lucas MP**



**Frank Fields MP**



**Matthew Reed**



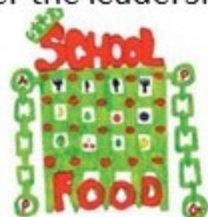
**Professor Russell Viner**



**Lord David Watts**

# Children's Future Food Inquiry Partners

Under the leadership of:



APPG on Hunger and Food Poverty

In partnership with:

**CiNI** Children in Northern Ireland



Food Sense Wales  
Synnwyr Bwyd Cymru

**Children in Scotland**



Children in Wales  
Plant yng Nghymru

University of  
**Kent** School of  
Social Policy,  
Sociology and  
Social Research



Coordinated by:



Lindsay Graham  
Dr Rys Farthing  
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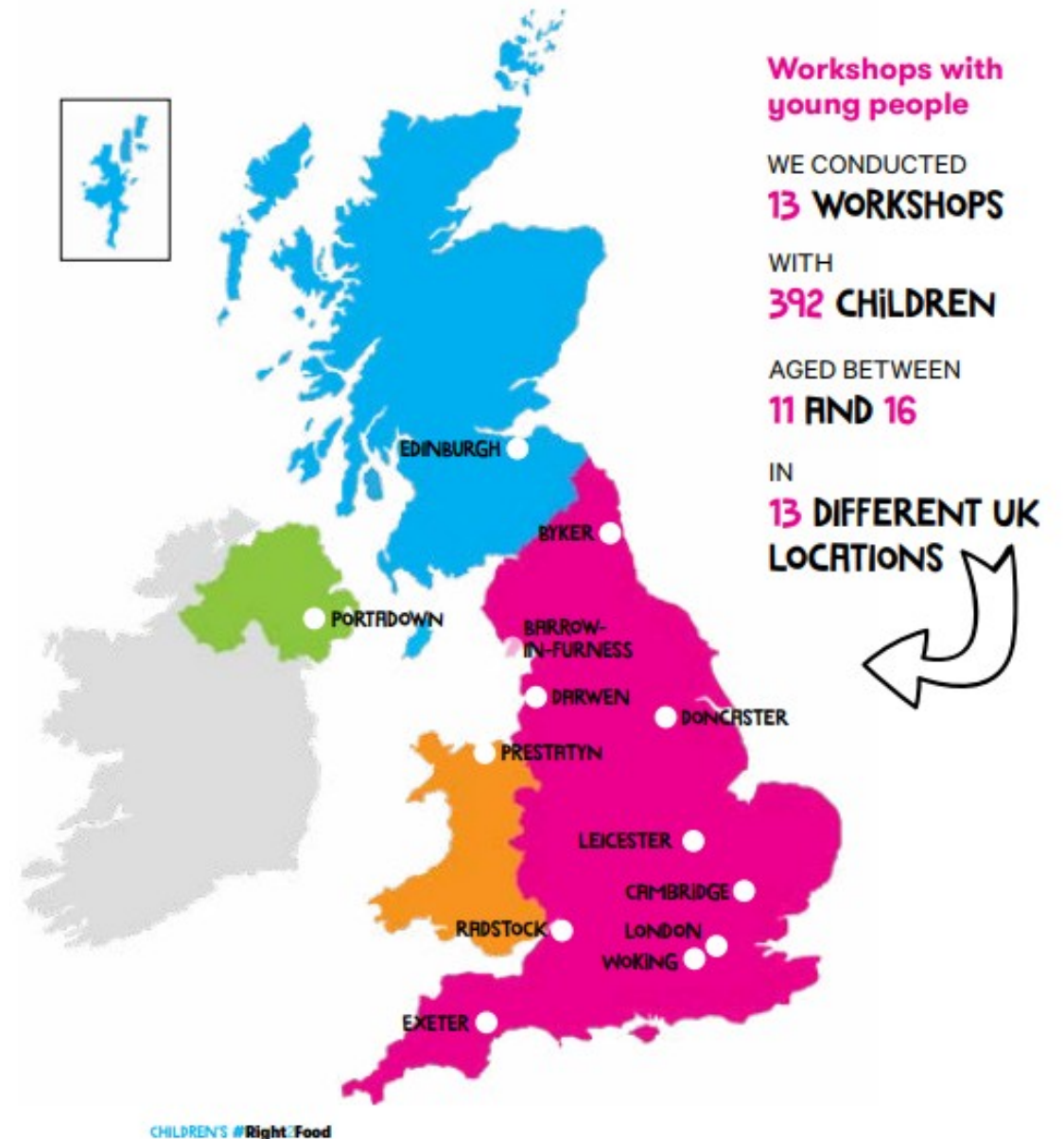


**LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY**



# The Inquiry has sourced a wide variety of evidence over a 12-month period.

1. Workshops with nearly 400 children
2. An academic review
3. Polling of young people aged 11-18 years
4. More than 100 submissions of evidence from people working with children
5. A UK wide policy review
6. Secondary analysis of government data on the affordability of a healthy diet.



# Food insecurity and obesity levels

## PREVALENCE OF OBESITY

### ENGLAND

Source: National Child Measurement Programme 2017/18

Age group: 4-5y (Reception)

Measure of deprivation: Deciles (based on postcode of school)

### SCOTLAND

Source: Child Health Surveillance Programme 2016/17

Age group: 4.5-6.5y (Primary 1)

Measure of deprivation: Quintiles

### WALES

Source: Child Measurement Programme 2017/18

Age group: 4-5y

Measure of deprivation: Quintiles

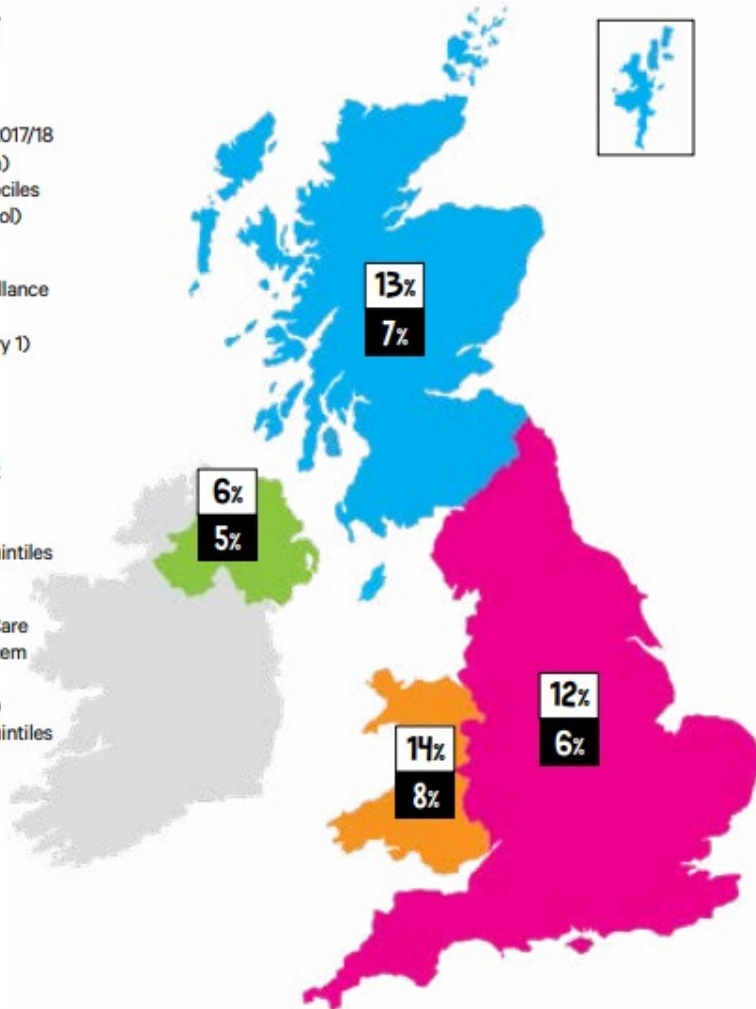
### NORTHERN IRELAND

Source: Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System 2015/16

Age group: 4-5y (Primary 1)

Measure of deprivation: Quintiles

SOURCE: (26-29)

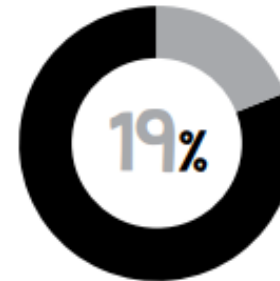


## CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS LIVING IN FOOD INSECURE HOUSEHOLDS IN THE UK

2014-16 (9)

Children living in moderate or severe food insecurity

2.5  
MILLION

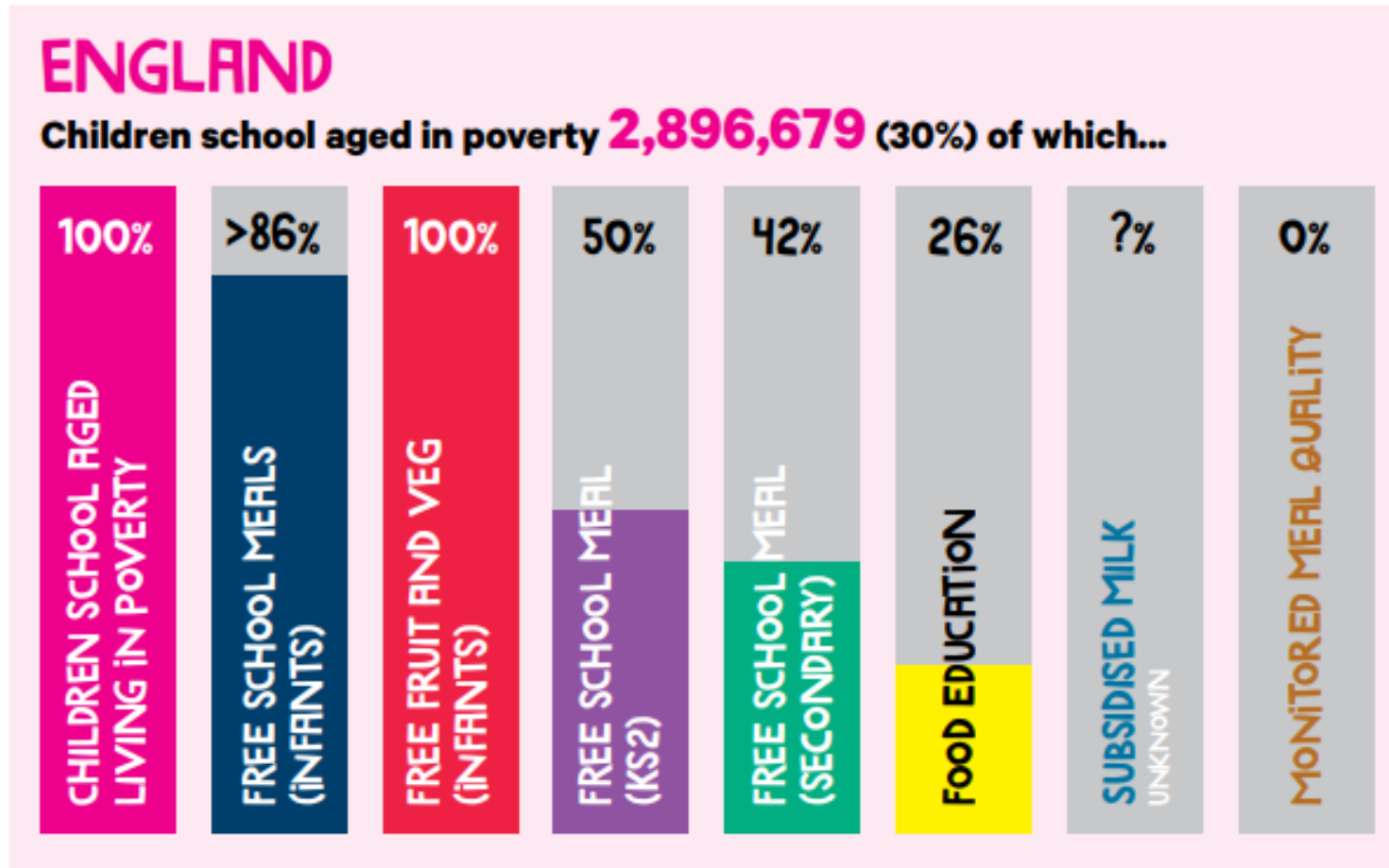


Children living in severe food insecurity

1.3  
MILLION



# School children living in poverty



ALL CHILDREN AGE FIVE TO SEVEN YEARS ARE ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS IN SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND BUT NOT IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND WALES



# What children told us about school food

## The free school meal credit of £2.30 is not enough:

- Unable to purchase breakfast or snack. If they can it does not leave enough for lunchtime.
- Children who are not on free school meals report spending £25-£30 on their food at school compared to the £11.50 which children on free school meals can spend.

## Free school meals carry a stigma:

- The name 'free school meals' was problematic in and of itself. It should be presented as more of a privilege than something to be embarrassed about.

## Meal times are not a valued part of the school day:

- Limited meal options, short lunchtime slots
- Like the teachers to be more involved at lunchtimes
- More in the curriculum about food insecurity in this country.

## Young people want to have a say on the food they are offered:

- The healthier options are more expensive
- Want a bigger say in food which is offered and wanted more sensitivity to cultural food preference and dietary requirements.

# Holiday Hunger

"It would be helpful if someone showed us how to cook. I can't **cook anything.**"

"I didn't have any breakfast 'cos there was nothing in the fridge. **I don't eat breakfast** much anyway. When we don't have any food for dinner my Dad will go out to borrow money from our neighbour. Sometimes he **doesn't come back** and I have to go to sleep"

Girl, 11

"Some children are **too scared** to speak up"

Young person who submitted to the evidence portal

"I don't always have the money to put a proper dinner down. I would get them pizza. **It's not as healthy as I would want but it's cheap.** I just don't have the money to go out and buy a proper dinner."

Parent of child attending holiday provision in Northern Ireland

'I feel **sad**- children should not be hungry. Every child should get a **hot meal** every day

Young person who submitted to the evidence portal



Dev Sharma



Fayeth Jones



Savannah Ross



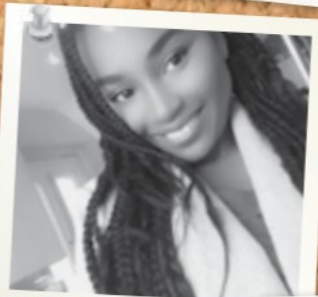
Asha Eva-Dodsworth



Jacob Kennedy



Tia Clarke



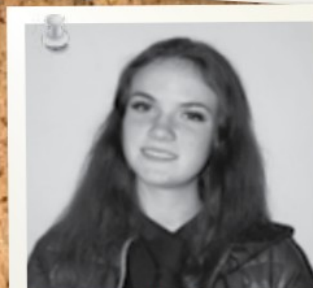
Jani Clarke



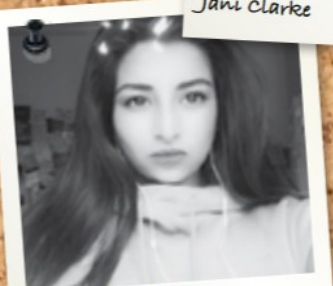
Aaron Ross



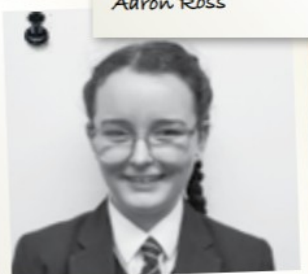
Janan Gill



Corey McPartland



Rabiya Hussain



Beth Rhodes



Artá Bāreme



Klaudia Welke

# CHILDREN'S FUTURE FOOD INQUIRY







# Children's #Right2Food Charter



It's not right that children are held back by poor diets and hunger. Our charter tells you how you can change this and help us unlock our potential.

CHILDREN'S FUTURE FOOD INQUIRY

## CHILDREN'S #RIGHT2FOOD CHARTER

### 1 THE HEALTHY LUNCH GUARANTEE

All children need a healthy lunch to grow and thrive, whether in nursery or school, term time or holidays and especially if times are tough at home.

**THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Providing free nursery meals to children who are entitled to free childcare – as promised in Scotland.
- Increasing the offer of free school meals to a wider group of children throughout age bands (as in Northern Ireland)
- Expanding the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme so all school children can benefit (primary and secondary)
- Including migrant and undocumented children without recourse to public funds in free school meals
- Introducing mandatory food standards in all nurseries as in Northern Ireland
- Expanding holiday provision programmes that are educational, fun and provide access to healthy food as a right to all young people
- Introducing Universal Infant Free School meals in Wales and Northern Ireland.

### 2 THE HEALTHY FOOD MINIMUM

It's right that our parents and carers are supported to put healthy food on the table.

**THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Expanding the Healthy Start voucher scheme by increasing the voucher value and increasing the number of children who benefit. This should build on Scotland's creation of 'Best Start Foods'
- Introducing financial holiday allowances for school holiday periods for lower income families
- When considering changes to support or wages for families, make laws that take food costs into account, and unlock the constraints of poverty on what we can eat.

#### PLEASE NOTE

The recommendations in this report cover areas of policy which have varying levels of devolution across the four UK nations. They are addressed to all four governments, local authorities, schools and businesses, according to their powers.

### 3 THE CHILDREN'S FOOD WATCHDOG

It's right that we have a say in what we eat. We think there needs to be a new, independent Children's Food Watchdog, with young people involved in the leadership, to monitor and improve our food.

**THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Monitoring and inspection of school and nursery meals
- Development of guidance for schools for food education including learning about UK food poverty, how it can be solved and the right to food in our curriculum
- Development of a national menu and best eating environments for secondary school students designed by young people that meets school food standards
- Stimulating learning on the best approaches to improving children's food across all four nations.

### 4 HEALTH BEFORE PROFITS

It's right that children's health come before the profits of big business.

**THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Stopping marketing aimed at children on packaging. Ending promotions of unhealthy foods and replacing these with health warnings similar to those featured on cigarette packets
- Tackling marketing of junk food on TV, near schools, online and on social media
- Increasing business rates for fast food shops near schools and using the funding to support food education and extended school day projects.

### 5 STOP THE STIGMA

We shouldn't be made to feel ashamed. In a decent society no-one should be struggling to put decent food on the table.

**THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Renaming free school meals as the "school meal allowance"
- Increasing the meal allowance for secondary school to a minimum of £4 per day, and allowing it to be used at any time of day and carried over between days
- Banning water being sold in schools and making it freely available for everyone throughout the school day
- "Poverty proofing" our schools to ensure that no one is left out of activities like cookery and ensuring those on free school meals are kept anonymous.



## Media coverage

The Inquiry has had over 100 media pieces of print, online and broadcast media coverage from:

- Today Programme
- The One Show
- ITV News
- Channel 4 News
- Sky News
- Huffington Post
- Guardian



## Cross-parliamentary support

Kerry McCarthy MP led a debate in Westminster Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> May

Frank Field MP held a backbench debate on 27<sup>th</sup> June

25 Hansard references



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## Department for Education Response

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### Comments from Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Nadhim Zahawi in the Backbench Debate on 27<sup>th</sup> June

- "I committed to providing a formal response in the autumn school term. ...I have asked my team to work with the Food Foundation, including on exploring how we might provide greater oversight of *children's* food by involving the inquiry's young food ambassadors, as well as with other relevant Government Departments."
- "On 7 June, I wrote to all schools in England to highlight the inquiry's findings and to remind them of their responsibilities in relation to school food."



