

Reducing health inequalities and social exclusion through an
intergenerational food project in a primary school.

Project from September 2017 to June 2019

A funded project from Big Lottery with Food for Life, Soil Association

By Lisa Didier

August 2019

Content	page no
Introduction.....	2
Literature Review.....	3
Health Background.....	6
School Background.....	8
Project Outline.....	9
Methodology.....	10
Findings and Evaluation.....	13
Measurement of success.....	13
Evaluation.....	14
Results.....	18
Discussion.....	20
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	26
Aims, Objectives and Outcomes.....	26
The positive effects.....	27
Advice to schools.....	27
What could be better.....	28
Bibliography.....	29
Appendices.....	30

Introduction

The Big Lottery has funded Food for Life to explore intergenerational work with Leicester City being one of 3 Pilot sites. Food for Life are currently working with 80 schools in Leicester City. Sandfield Close Primary school have been working with Food for Life since 2015. They are a proactive school in improving health and wellbeing for their pupils. They currently have the Bronze Food for Life award and have been working towards their Silver award. They often invite members of the community to have lunch at the school and were keen to become involved in intergenerational work. There was a community group of older Asian ladies who met at the school regularly and this is what prompted the Headteacher to become involved in the project. The Headteacher wanted to increase community involvement in the school.

The project aims to work with a group of Grandparents working with children in Sandfield Close Primary school to promote good food, improve health and wellbeing and improve social inclusion. This will be achieved by assisting Reception children (aged 4 and 5) in improving knife and fork skills when they start school September 2018 and to improve cooking skills in Reception and year 5.

A food growing training session was planned, potentially using growing experts from the community. An overall plan was developed, bringing together the food growing aspects with cooking sessions and tying this in with meeting curriculum requirements. This project will use a co-design test and learn approach as directed by the funding bid.

Literature Review.

Intergenerational

The main body of research literature around intergenerational work focusses on the 0-4-year age group linking with Care Homes with a focus around improving dementia in the older age group. This proposed project differs, in that its focus is on improving positive food choices for both generations and improving social inclusion in the older participants. Despite the lack of research literature, recent national reports and strategic plans are beginning to discuss the advantages of intergenerational work and improving social inclusion in the older age group.

Two examples of intergenerational work are presented in *The Next Generation: how intergenerational interaction improves life chances of children and young people* (2019). The first, 'InCommon' is a social enterprise bringing generations together with groups of primary school children visiting retirement homes. The programme links with the school curriculum to teach students about the stages of life, dealing with changes and how we all grow old (United for All Ages 2019).

The second, 'Full Circle' identifies older people, often at risk of isolation and loneliness and invites them to volunteer in school. They work with groups of pupils in schools; gardening, playing a game, or it might be just eating and chatting. The school then identifies pupils who it feels would benefit from this experience. The key is that it is not curriculum time, and it is not about assessing academic progress. There are sometimes teething issues getting schemes going, but once established in schools, staff involved speak with passion about the positive impact they observe with pupils. Many of the older volunteers feel it gives them something to get up for in the morning, and it also gives them company of others which they might not have otherwise from day to day (United for All Ages 2019).

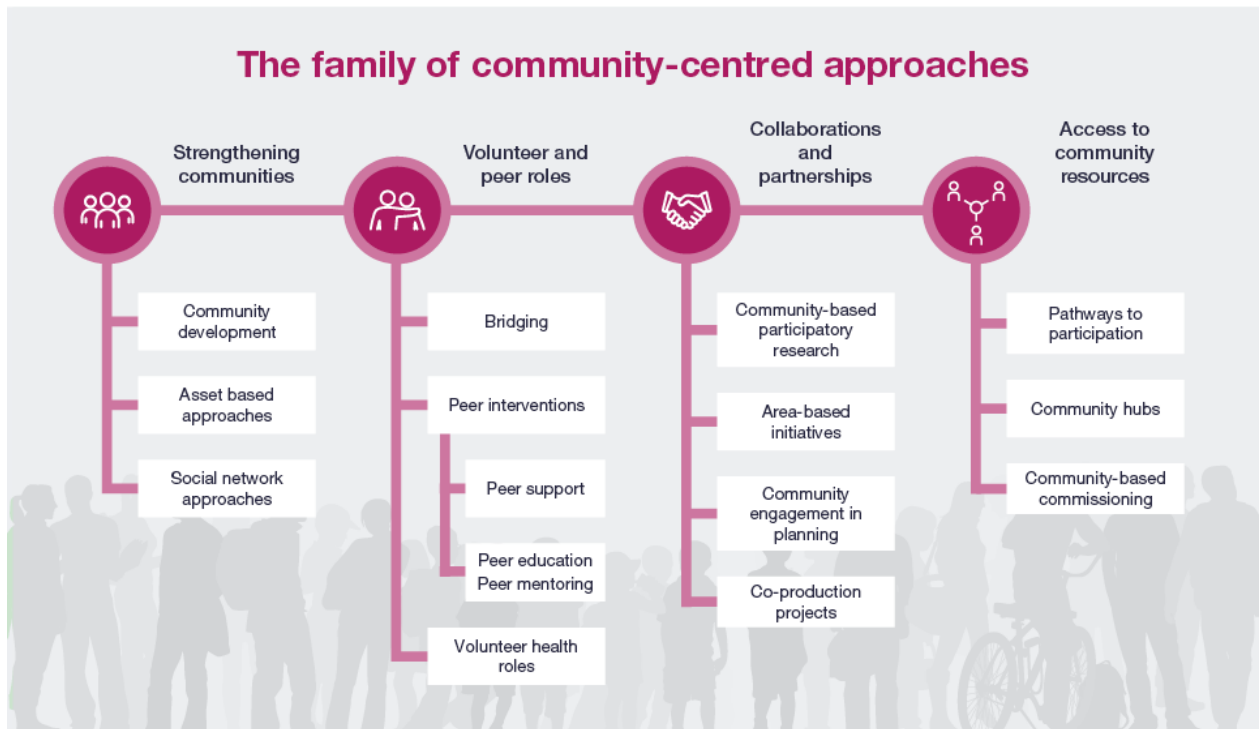
The St Monica Trust (2018) presents an intergenerational project in Care Homes. They discuss some of the benefits for the older person which are; better general health and well-being, an increase in physical, mental and creative activity, improvement in brain function, feeling less isolated, more opportunities for social inclusion, the ability to share cultural experiences and the opportunity to make new friends. Whilst the benefits for the children

are; learning values and norms, and how to interact with older people from different backgrounds, development of teamworking skills and increased understanding and respect.

In the government strategy for tackling loneliness (2018), it acknowledges that community infrastructure can empower social connections. For example, opening community spaces such as schools to be used in creative ways. The government will produce guidance to schools on insurance and safeguarding issues to encourage this. The school that participated in this project would have benefited from such support and guidance.

What Works Wellbeing 'tackling loneliness' (2018) reviewed 364 reports on what is effective on tackling loneliness. The evidence illustrates that there is no one size fits all approach to alleviating loneliness in older people. It suggests that more tailored approaches are effective. Activities such as gardening were named as being an effective element to use when reducing loneliness. Gardening is classed as moderate activity of which Public Health England and NHS England (2016) recommend 150 minutes moderate exercise each week and being outside will also increase vitamin D levels.

Public Health England and NHS England (2016), presented a briefing which draws together documents, research and learning on community centred approaches for health and wellbeing. They acknowledge that as life expectancy rises, different approaches to long term health for older people need to be explored. Public Health England (2018) present a model for 'community -centred approaches for health and wellbeing' (below). Volunteer and peer roles having a prominent role to play. The 'centre for ageing better' (2016), layout their goals in their transforming later lives strategy. Their goals include; looking at inclusive approaches to community participation, through connected communities.



Despite the lack of research literature around community based intergenerational work, national organisations are setting out community-based approaches with volunteering for older people as a key for improving loneliness and health for older peoples.

Health Background

In the 'Ending Childhood Obesity' implementation plan (2016), the World Health Organisation offers recommendations and actions to tackle childhood obesity. Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for several non-communicable chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Once considered a problem only in high income countries, overweight and obesity are increasing in low and middle-income countries, particularly in urban settings. They explain that overweight and obesity need a comprehensive response to create healthy environments and to offer individuals support to make healthy choices through increased knowledge and skills around health and nutrition. This is the basis for the intergenerational food project, looking at the dining hall, nutrition, cooking, food growing skills and a whole school approach to healthy eating.

Research from the Cohort and Longitudinal Studies Enhancement Resources (CLOSER), and IOE-led consortium of UK longitudinal studies, are cited in the Government's Child Obesity Strategy (2016). The study believed to be the first of its kind, tracked increases in body mass index (BMI) for more than 56,000 people born in the UK from 1946 to 2001. The findings showed that children born since 1990 are up to three times more likely than older generations to be overweight or obese by age 10. Demonstrating that obesity is a growing Public Health challenge.

Reasons for the rise in childhood obesity in the last decade are outlined in Public Health: ethical issues (2014). Food high in fat, sugar and highly processed, has become cheaper and more available. There has been an increase in the range and number of 'fast food' outlets. Food of this type is therefore more readily available for consumption instead of, or in addition to, meals cooked at home. Highly processed food is often nutritionally poor and low in protein. Home life has changed, and there is some evidence that working parents are less likely to cook more traditional, balanced meals. One reason for this is that many people, especially women are under greater time constraints than they used to be. Additionally, there has been a loss of cooking skills. During the meetings with the grandmas prior to the commencement of the project, these topics were talked about by the grandmas and this literature backs up the comments made by the grandmas.

The Childhood Obesity strategy 2016: A Plan for Action, states that long term, sustainable change will only be achieved through the active engagement of schools, communities, families and individuals. This is to encourage the food environment in school to be designed so that easy choices are the healthy ones. To reinforce this message, Ofsted will inspect schools on their approaches to tackling obesity amongst its pupils. This is relevant for Leicester City as the Leicester City JSNA 2016 shows that obese children aged 10-11 are significantly worse than England's average. Work is needed in schools with the wider community to demonstrate that support is being offered to schools for them to implement healthy food strategies.

The Healthy Schools Rating Scheme; Guidance for Schools, was launched by the Department for Education July 2019 as proposed in the 2016 Childhood Obesity strategy. This voluntary scheme encourages schools to complete a self-assessment on healthy food and physical activity that the school participates in. The schools are rated at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. The categories include; food education, school food standards, physical education and active travel schemes. This gives evidence for Ofsted and to parents that the school contributes to pupil's health and wellbeing.

The Leicester City JSNA 2015 based on GP register data, shows that Leicester has a higher prevalence of diabetes in its adult population (over 17+ years) - 8.9% compared to 6.4% nationally, with 93% of people with diabetes having T2D. It is estimated that every year there are approximately 1,000 new cases of diabetes in Leicester City. Diabetes prevalence in Leicester is more common in older ages where around 1 in 4 people aged over 65 has diabetes, with the rate in the Asian population almost four times higher than the rest of the population.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2016) shows health indicators for Leicester City with above average obesity levels for young people and poor oral health. Equally the city has high rates of children who are underweight. This demonstrates a need to improve nutrition across the board. The proportion of Leicester's Year 6 pupils who are obese and overweight is statistically higher at 37.3% compared to England at 34.2%.

School Background

Sandfield Close Primary School is one of 80 schools across Leicester that participate in Food for Life and are proactive around pupil's health and wellbeing. Sandfield Close Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from a minority ethnic background, the largest group being of Indian origins. A large proportion of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.

Sandfield Close Primary School is a Bronze Food for Life school and working towards their Silver award. They have a wildlife area and a growing area which is starting to be more utilised. The school have just installed a solar dome for food growing, and recently entered the meal barrow competition at the BBC good food exhibition. Food growing in the Solar Dome could be improved and an overall growing plan will give consistency to food growing for use in the kitchen and in cooking classes. School meals have improved in school and they regularly invite parents and the community into school to eat with the children. The school cook, and her team are dedicated to improving the school food environment. Both the cook and assistant cook take an active role in delivering cooking sessions to children and parents and will assist in the grandma's project.

The Headteacher at Sandfield Close primary expressed a problem they have at lunchtime with the Reception children when they first start school in September. A lot of children start school without being able to feed themselves using knives and forks. The JSNA 2015 shows that Leicester City is the worst statistically in the country for school readiness. Teachers and Midday Supervisors do not have the time to focus on giving direct advice to the children. The Headteacher was keen to have community involvement at lunchtimes to try and remedy this issue.

Project Outline.

The initial outline of the project was to train a group of grandparent volunteers to support Reception children when they first start school (September 2018) with their cutlery skills and positive food choices. This comes from an expressed need from the Headteacher who has observed that children start school unable to feed themselves and use knives and forks. To train the grandparent volunteers group to deliver cooking in the curriculum to Reception and year 5 children. The grandparent volunteers will be trained in how to demonstrate and encourage children to use knives and forks correctly. To assist in producing a food growing and cooking plan for the school

Aims Objectives and Outcomes

Aims of the project

- Improve social exclusion with the grandma's group.
- Increase activity in the grandma's group
- Improve healthy eating outcomes of both younger and older participants.

Objectives of the project

- Improve intergenerational work within the school setting
- Increase in knowledge around cooking skills in school.
- Improve knowledge around food growing and how to cook with produce in school.
- Improve use of cutlery in the Reception children.

Outcomes:

- Influence the health outcomes of older persons by educating them to help and assist the younger generation in their health decisions.
- An improvement in children trying new foods through cooking activities
- Children will be encouraged to eat more vegetables for their lunchtime meal.
- An improvement in social inclusion for the older participants.
- There is the passing on of skills within the intergenerational work
- An improvement in children's knife and fork skills.
- An improvement in cooking skills and knowledge for children at school.
- An improvement in gardening at the school, connecting where food comes from to the food eaten.

Methodology

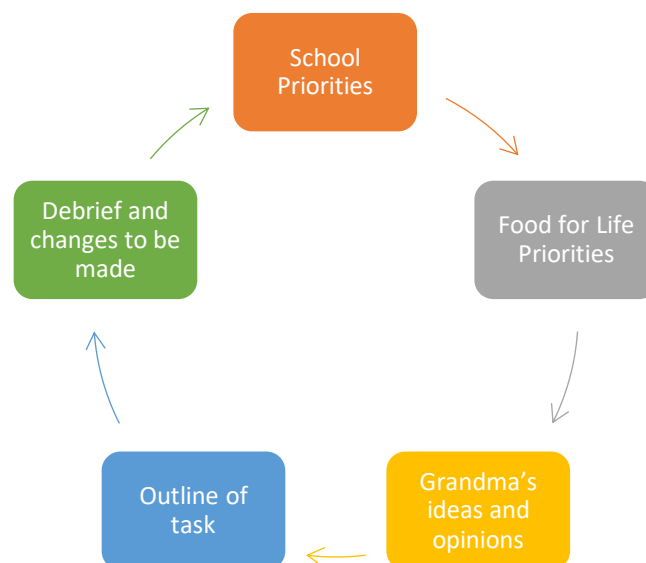
The planning of the project was an important stage in trying to marry the different health needs of the two groups into one project. I applied an ecological model to the plan for the project for both the older and younger groups. This model considers the multiple levels of influence on health behaviours which applies to both groups. Through this I was able to look for similar and different influences on health beliefs and behaviour in both groups. The theory of change model was used and the test and learn model followed and evaluated.

The co design model was a requirement of the funding from the big lottery. The co design approach was built on research already carried out in the development of Food for Life Better Care by the Innovation Unit and Soil Association (Innovation Unit 2016). The co design approach for this project involved the following steps.

Following recruitment;

- Meetings and discussions with participants
- Test and Learn carried out.
- Evaluation.

The test and learn approach followed the cycle below.



The intervention ladder was used to plan and monitor health belief and behaviour change in the children's group around lunchtimes. This looked at the choices available, with the

grandparent volunteers guiding the children through incentives, enabling choice and providing information. During lunchtimes, looking at and influencing the choices made and eaten by the children and using incentives for the children. The school also played a part in the intervention ladder by re-examining the school food policy to enable good food choices and keep families informed about the health, social and psychological benefits to the children involved in the project.

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with both the grandparent volunteers and the children were used for evaluation. This method was chosen as it helps to measure success against the objectives in a way that both the grandmas and the children would benefit. I had to find an equitable way that would suit both groups and the semi structured interview technique did this. Through this, I could determine the meaning of the programme for the participants. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed, analysed and the information placed into categories using coding. Using this technique allows the participants to express the results of the project in their own words. Qualitative approaches are particularly good for finding out about unintended effects and why these effects occurred.

Observational analysis was used by staff to observe over time, the ability of the children to eat with knives and forks and choosing to eat the healthy options on their plates as opposed to leaving the vegetables and salad on their plates.

Recruitment of grandparents

An Apna Milan older ladies group met regularly at Sandfield Close Primary. This group consisted of up to 50 older Asian ladies and met weekly. Initial meetings and discussions were held with this group up until December 2017. The Headteacher was keen to involve this group in the school but has been unable to devote the time to this. A teaching assistant (TA) from the school was helping in running this group. It was unfortunate that during December 2017 several school staff had to be made redundant which included the TA. Due to sensitivities for staff and a period of reorganisation, the Headteacher recommended that we put this project on hold until after the Easter term.

To carry on with the project we decided to recruit grandmas from the school, some of which would be part of the original Apna Milan group. A letter went out to all the families from the school to see if there was any interest from older people connected with the school. This did

not prove successful, so following this and in conjunction with the school receptionist, grandmas were identified who drop off and pick up their grandchildren from the school. This direct approach from the receptionist proved more successful and 5 grandmas were contacted.

There was no take up initially when the Headteacher asked for volunteers in the newsletter, so with the help of the school receptionist, letters were given to targeted grandparents who drop their grandchildren off at school (appendix 1). All grandparents were invited to become volunteers as I did not want to discriminate against male or female. However, only grandmas expressed an interest in the project.

The newly recruited grandma's group commenced at the end of May 2018. Meeting regularly for group cohesion was important as none of the grandma's knew each other. This gave an opportunity to talk about and hear their views on food and educate the ladies on the poor health indicators of the children in Leicester. This lasted for 8 weeks prior to the end of the summer term. During this time, it was important to bring them together as a group with a common goal and look at concepts of health and health issues affecting children. In particular, high levels of diabetes in the south Asian population, the high levels of obesity amongst children in Leicester City and the high level of tooth decay. Notes were taken during the meetings and used to measure success, change in attitudes and other unintended results of discussions.

At the start of the new term, the Reception children attend half days for the first week. It was envisaged that the grandmas would start after the first week, when the children had had a full week of lunches. This would let the children get used to the general day of school before introducing the project to lunchtimes.

Findings and evaluation.

Measurement of success and interim findings.

For the cutlery skills project, it was decided that a measure of success would be by observation by the school cook, the Headteacher, the Reception class teachers and the midday supervisor manager. An assessment was made at the start of term as to how many out of 38 children could eat with a knife and fork. At the start of the school term in September, 6 children could hold a knife and fork with 3 being able to use a knife and fork. By October half term 20 can hold a knife and fork and 10 can eat with a knife and fork.

Two members of the Food for Life Better Care team produced an interim report on the initial successes of the project (separate document attachment). The positive effects for the grandmas;

- Socialising with each other
- Not all the grandmas had grandchildren at the school, and this gives them an opportunity to socialise with children regularly.
- Being asked to help gives a sense of pride and positive self-image
- They feel a sense of purpose and accomplishment from seeing the progress children are making

The positive effect for the children;

- With the help of the grandmas, the children can remain focused on their food and eat more and better.
- Children feel more confident and are willing to try new food.
- The grandmas also interact with the older children, which contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere in the dining room.
- Learning to hold and use knives and forks help children to develop the necessary motor skills for writing.

The impact of the cooking.

- Passing on skills
- Easing the work load for school staff,
- Learning about heritage through food
- Learning new vocabulary
- Learning whilst having fun.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the project using a semi-structured interview was conducted with the grandmas and the children separately.

In the children's interview (appendix 3), I had 7 children, 3 girls and 4 boys. The girls were more talkative, and I had to ask direct questions to the boys. There were 4 themes emerging. One of the themes was around the grandmas. When I asked the question "what do you think about lunchtimes with the grandmas?" the common reply was 'I loved them'. One little boy said that he didn't like them as he could cut his own food up. During further discussion, the children commented that some of the food was hard to cut, "when I couldn't cut things they helped me...when I couldn't cut the cheese flan...they helped me because it was hard". This relates to comments made by the grandmas, that some of the food was too hard for the children to cut correctly and this was fed back to the kitchen staff.

I asked the question about when they first started; what did they think about going into the dining hall for the first time? Being worried was mentioned by three of the children together with one little girl talking about crying and not wanting to go back. One little boy commented 'when my class left, there was only the big children left and I was worried'. Another boy commented that he was 'worried because I didn't want to eat everything'. This tension and worry from children about the first time they were in the school dining hall will be highlighted in the feedback to other schools. The grandmas were reassuring with the children and represented a homely perception for the children. The grandmas were not teachers or dinner time personal and this made a difference to the young children. The grandmas had been introduced to the children at the beginning of the project and the children called them nanny G or nanny R respectively, which is different to other school staff.

I asked them if they had enjoyed cooking with the grandmas and they spoke excitedly about this. 'you know one grandma.....she holded the grate and I grated the carrot.....that was good....because I couldn't hold it.....because I didn't have strong hands that much'. 'I love grating', 'I cut the potato', 'I like when we cutting the vegetables and we made a fruit salad', 'My favourite bit was when the grandmas were showing us all the fruit and vegetables'. It is clear from these comments and comments made at school to me and observations, that the

children all loved cooking with the grandmas. Indeed, they love cooking. During the interview some of the children mentioned things they had made at home as well.

When I asked the question if they used a knife and fork at home, there were some interesting replies; 'my mum feeds me', 'sometimes my mum cuts everything up for me so that I only use a fork....but sometimes I use a spoon and fork', 'I eat things at home that I can eat with my hands.....but by myself' (chapati and dahl). The grandmas commented on the fact that after a school holiday, the children tended to move backwards in their cutlery skills after being at home. The grandmas also commented that parents were learning about knife and fork skills when they were invited to have a school meal with their child. The difference to the children's skills may have been better with earlier parental involvement at the beginning of the project.

In the grandmas interview all 5 were together (appendix 3). There were 8 emerging themes for this interview; what they had learnt, being in school, the dining hall, gardening, cutlery skills, their well-being and social inclusion, packed lunches, the co-design process.

The question asked about what they had learnt gave a variety of answers; 'I learnt about the cooking', 'how to handle the knives correctly', 'how to teach the kids as well', 'We used it to teach the children, but we learnt ourselves', 'We knew the skills but didn't know the specific names and it's important to get it right for the children.....even we learnt safety', 'And the hydration station, we learnt at home, the mint and orange one, my two grandchildren have that and take it to school now', 'I learnt from the cooking', 'when we did the cooking, we had to know about some of the nutrients as well. I mean it said chickpea curry, but we put so many vegetables in it'. I had a concern that the grandmas would not be as open to learning about cooking as much as they did. They were all very good cooks and knew a lot about traditional recipes and which food went together but they seem to have learnt from and enjoyed the cooking training session.

The grandmas commented that they loved the enthusiasm of the children when it came to cooking and similarly with the enthusiasm with the gardening. 'The children had watering cans everywhere', 'They liked gardening', 'oh they did' 'that little girl....she wanted to do everything. She wanted to water, dig and plant', 'She was good with it.....she wanted to learn more'. During the interview they discussed about the plants in school and if everyone

is watering the plants everyday as it had been warm. 'I'm worried about the cucumbers. They all began talking at once about the strawberries and other veg they planted. The gardening was a success with the grandmas and children alike.

I asked the question, out of all the activities they did, which ones did they enjoy? Apart from them all answering, 'all of them', the grandmas seem to have got satisfaction from the cutlery skills; 'Yes it was very interesting', 'You feel so happy that they are doing it properly' 'We are coming first, nobody knew anything and now they can' ' Especially when they come to you and say, look I can do this now', 'and now they can feed themselves. If they can't cut the food, they can't feed themselves, they stay hungry all the time', 'They were very proud that they could do it' 'I'm sure when they go home, they must be feeding back and the day that we had the parents coming in.....it was also very fruitful. It was very strange to see that some of them (parents) didn't know themselves.....do you remember.....it's not only Indian parents.....they (parents) were saying....look what the teacher is showing you how do it' 'And they (parents) were quite interested in learning too'.

The well-being and social inclusion of the grandmas was positive. 'Well I mean, me especially, I'm just a housewife, I never go out, I only go shopping, I'd never been to school, only to drop off children. You really encouraged me', 'for me my confidence has grown, I look forward to going to school, you learn so many things and it makes you active, you know when you know you have to be somewhere it makes you get your things in order' 'I got confidence talking in front of the camera...put me in front of anything now and I'll talk' 'We have made lovely friends, we met Lisa....she's looked after us' 'we met people from the lottery' 'we didn't know many other people at Manchester (when they gave the presentation at the national conference appendix 4 and 6) and straight away we were talking to everyone', 'I didn't have many friends and now I have so many'. They all commented about when they were in Manchester there was a lot of interest in the project and people were asking if they could visit their school, 'The highlight is that so many others are interested'.

The grandmas commented on the process which was the co-design process, but they did not know it was called that. 'We all felt part of what was going on. We never planned anything beforehand...it was at the meetings, we were part of it and we could make suggestions and how we could change things', 'It changed many times', 'It was like our

project, not Lisa's project', 'that's down to you (Lisa)...you could have said...no I'm the boss but you took in everyone's views and we all mucked in', 'you (Lisa) made everyone comfortable' 'We are getting all the attention but it was you (Lisa) behind it', 'you gave us the liberty to say something, and we knew if said something and you didn't like it or think it was good....that's when you said....I think we might give this way a try.....I think you did that cleverly.....and politically well', 'If we wanted to change anything you were very subtle about it.....If it was someone else who was a bit stiff lipped I don't think it would have worked....but with Lisa you felt like you could talk' 'we weren't tense'. The co design process worked well in this instance that the grandmas felt part of the process.

The packed lunches were an example of the test and learn process that did not work so well. Packed lunches were a concern of the grandmas and so different approaches were adopted by the grandmas but work on lunchboxes needed to be led by the school. 'Although we were there for the cutlery and encourage eating, we did have a look at the lunch boxes.....I was shocked to see them.....I mean at first we were just focused on the young children but then when we could help the older ones, I didn't realise the state of the lunch boxes....most of them never had a nice lunch box' 'some of them had really nice ones...but others' 'I mean, one had a piece of bread and a chocolate.....just plain bread, no butter....how can the kids eat that...why the parents don't think..it's my child and then give them nice food'.

Results

Local statistics such as childhood obesity statistics, nutrition, children's oral health and diabetes statistics in the older Asian community, demonstrate a need for health interventions in both the younger and older populations.

One of the main results was the success of the use of cutlery with the Reception children. This was conducted using observational analysis via the school cook, the Headteacher, Reception teachers, myself and the grandmas. An assessment was made at the start of term as to how many out of 38 children could eat with a knife and fork. At the start of the school term in September, 6 children could hold a knife and fork with 3 being able to use a knife and fork. By October half term 2018, 20 can hold a knife and fork and 10 could eat with a knife and fork. By June 2019, all 38 could hold a knife and fork, 35 could eat with a knife and fork as 3 still needed assistance in using a knife. This was a better outcome than in previous years and indeed a quicker response earlier in the year than previous years. At the beginning of September 2018 around 10 year 1 children could not use a knife and fork successfully. This activity enhanced the classroom activities on improving the children's fine motor skills.

Regarding the effect on the physical health of the grandmas, especially the prevalence of diabetes in their community, not much influence other than awareness raising would have been effective on preventing diabetes. The grandmas by nature that they volunteered for a food project in school, were eating healthy anyway. The only issue was with salt. They felt that there was not enough salt in the children's food and that that altered the taste for children. Despite various talks with the dietician and the cooking skills teacher and the school cook, they had not altered their views on salt in their own diet and the taste of school food for children.

There was a positive effect on social inclusion with the grandmas, as part of the evaluation, they all commented on the fact that they had made new friends. The grandma that had looked after her husband at home prior to his death commented that she had no friends her own age and that she had made so many since her involvement in the project. Another commented that "I'm just a housewife, I never go out, I only go shopping". This seemed to

be common for the other grandmas. They have met up at each other's houses to swap recipes and veg and flower cuttings. When we presented at the National Conference in Manchester, one grandma had never been on a train before and another had never been away without her family. We stayed in Manchester the night before and all travelled together. We laughed from getting on the train until the next day when we returned. They all commented on how much fun they had and what a positive experience the whole two days had been.

The effect of having the grandmas in school was positive in many ways for the children. The evaluation was only conducted with the Reception children but on talking to other school staff, the grandmas had a good influence on other year groups in the dining room. In the interview with the Reception children, it was apparent that they loved having the grandmas there and they enjoyed and spoke excitedly about the cooking they had done with the grandmas. They also loved picking herbs and salad leaves grown at school and making a salad with the grandmas. The children spoke about being worried about the dining hall and the food when they had started in September. One little girl spoke about crying in the hall and a little boy commented that when he was left in the hall still eating when his class had gone, he didn't like being with the older children. It is important to remember that 4 and 5-year-old children may have never eaten outside of the home before, or at a table, or eaten with a large group of people. This issue will be looked at further when making recommendations to other schools looking to replicate the project.

The cook and senior staff in the school, observed that at the beginning of the project that at least 5 out of the 38 children were regularly bringing packed lunches. By the end of the project, all the children were having the UIFSM Universal Infant Free School Meals. UIFSM came into schools in September 2014. All key stage 1 children (Reception to year 2) are entitled to a free school meal. The Headteacher had already been trying to encourage all children to take up the offer of a free meal to avoid children bringing in nutritionally poor lunchboxes. The focused attention of the grandmas on encouraging children to try new or different foods had been successful in increasing uptake of the UIFSM.

Discussion

Despite the lack of literature and research around community based intergenerational work, national organisations are setting out community-based approaches with volunteering for older people as a key for improving loneliness and health for older peoples.

Recruitment of grandmas took a longer time than expected. This was due to priorities in the school, staff changes and re-organisation of the school in January 2018. The school was supportive of the idea of the project but help from the project lead was needed to guide and carry out practical tasks for the recruitment to work, such as printing out letters, taking them to classrooms to put into the children's school bags and talking to the wider school staff. This process took approximately 5 weeks.

There was also contact from a daughter of an older Asian lady who had heard about the project and asked if her mum could be included in the project. Their father/husband had died a few months earlier and the daughter wanted to keep her mum occupied and was worried about the loneliness affecting her mum from the loss of her husband. Her mum had looked after her father for a while at home during a long illness prior to his passing.

The new grandma's group were ready to meet at the end of May and met weekly up until the end of term mid-July. There were 6 interested grandmas. Because of a break in the momentum of the meetings due to the 6 weeks summer holidays, two of the original group did not come back to the meetings at the start of school term in September. One of the group supports a pupil for mornings at the school on a one to one basis and so could not join in with the practical lunchtime sessions with the Reception children. She did attend all the meetings and training as she is keen to be involved in the cooking sessions with the year 5 children as she only works mornings. It was decided to commence with the lunch time project with the Reception children in September 2018 as this was a gentler introduction to school life for the grandmas in the group.

The first few meetings of the group were to introduce the concepts around food, what school would like to happen, what Food for Life is hoping to achieve and collect the grandma's ideas. This gave the group a focus during meetings and an important aspect of bringing the group together through shared ideas. Public Health data on childhood obesity children's oral health and the prevalence of diabetes in the south Asian population was

presented to the group. Issues discussed included; the wider determinants of health including; lack of incentives or desire towards healthy eating, inactivity with increase in use of technology, not walking to school, playing outside, the cheapness of high calorific food, the effort required to cook and eat with vegetables. We discussed the developmental stages of what children go through when developing fine motor skills and feeding themselves with knives and forks. Together we developed some guidance on developing cutlery skills which was shared with the group (appendix 2). These first few weeks were also used to discuss the grandma's own health beliefs.

Perceptions and expectations of health were apparent when discussing food and health with the grandmas. We discussed at length, the cultural experiences of the grandmas around cooking good food and healthy food. They had particular views on how busy family lives with both parents working and lack of cooking skills was impacting on the health of the children. Their views were quite critical of the 'modern family' and I discussed with them some of the realities faced by working families and those in poverty. Home life has changed, and working parents are less likely to cook more traditional, balanced meals. One reason for this is that many people, especially women are under greater time constraints than they used to be. Additionally, there is a lack of cooking skills in the younger generation.

Sandfield Close Primary is very diverse, and this was discussed with the grandmas at the beginning of the project. The grandmas were either Hindu or Sikh and we had discussions to raise awareness of cultural differences around food and made the grandmas aware that there were children in the school with other religious beliefs. Some food is eaten with hands and the same foods may be eaten using hands or cutlery in different contexts. When parents were invited in to have lunch and to see the grandmas in action, a Muslim parent asked one of the grandmas if she realised that in the Hadith (a source of Islamic guidance), eating and drinking with the left hand is the habit of Satan. This was discussed with the Headteacher at the end of the session and we agreed that there was a misunderstanding from the parent's point of view with which hand the children held their knife or fork.

The grandmas were shocked at the number of children that had to be served and seated in the dining room in one hour. They were a little over awed initially about being in the dining room. During the weekly meetings prior to the project starting, the grandmas regularly had lunch with the children, and this was important to get used to being in the dining room. It

often appeared like organised chaos. At the beginning of the project I envisioned that the grandmas would model good cutlery skills by sitting with the children and eating. However, it became clear after the first session that the children needed more one to one work. Once the Reception children had eaten, the grandmas then had their school meal with the other year groups.

The grandmas discussed the issue of portion control and the effects this had on health. During their time with children at school meal times they commented on the fact that some portions were too big for some of the smaller children and not enough for the year 6 children. This was fed back to the cook and kitchen staff who explained that although they did often serve more food to those children they know are hungry, they had to stick to a similar portion size for all as for children in years 3-6, all parents paid the same amount of money for their meals and also the kitchen is supplied with a regulated amount of stock for cooking a particular number of meals. I have found this view about portion control amongst many schools that I work with and it is often down to individual staff in the kitchens knowing the children well and adapting to their needs accordingly. This is an unofficial but meaningful method of portion control.

I discussed the role of grandmas in general and we agreed that grandmas often feel like they can give sugary treats to grandchildren. There is a cultural expectation that grandmas can give treats that parents might not. We discussed the outcomes of this and how alternative treats could be provided.

During my discussions with the grandmas, it became apparent that they had a particular view about salt in food. They did not view salt as bad for you or would consider the notion to use less salt in cooking nor on food. Due to this belief, the grandmas commented that there was not enough salt in the school meals and maybe that was why some children did not like the taste. I discussed the effects of salt on health and explained why there is no salt used in school meals and I explained why the school food standards had been developed. This belief in the use of salt continued throughout the project. This was despite the cooking skills trainer explaining about not using salt in children's food and alternatives to salt, and the NHS dietician explaining about the effects of salt on their health. The progress and success of the project in other areas of health and wellbeing were positive and but their views on salt remained the same.

The grandmas and I discussed cooking techniques and the healthy way to cook food, especially in traditional Indian cookery. I asked the grandmas to present their ways of traditional Indian cooking and to reflect on how they could make some of the recipes have a healthier option. A lot of oil and fried foods are common in traditional Indian cooking and alternative ways to cook these were discussed. Cooking techniques and aspects of nutrition would be different for older people and younger children. I arranged a training session for the grandmas around the skills for cooking that are part of the school curriculum with a school cooking skills trainer where we discussed changes in nutritional needs between younger and older people.

The grandmas could not teach their own style of chopping and knife skills to the children. They recognised that the way they were taught, and prepared food would not be appropriate for young children and they accepted this and were willing to learn a different technique. They needed to understand the correct way of teaching knife and other food preparation skills to children. During the interviews with the children and the reaction of pupils around school, the children loved cooking with the grandmas. During the interview with the children they all spoke animatedly about cooking and went on to talk about what they had made at home. The same can be said for gardening with the children. There is a link between gardening, picking your own ingredients and cooking and getting children to try new foods. This is something the children loved doing.

In the evaluation the children commented that they needed help cutting food that was too hard. The grandmas commented regularly and fed back to the cook about this. It was disappointing to hear that 3 of the children interviewed were not using a knife and fork at home. This indicates that for future projects, information needs to go out to parents and inviting them in for school meals need to happen earlier in the project. The comments made by the children about their fear and upset about being in the dining hall needs to be acknowledged by the school at the beginning of each term.

There was some tension initially between the midday supervisors and the grandmas. As there had been recent job losses in the previous school year, the remaining staff felt threatened by the grandmas going in. They were worried that they could be replaced by volunteers. A meeting with Midday Supervisors at the start of the project would be recommended.

This test and learn approach to the project meant that some ideas did not work, and these have been noted. This approach also lends itself to the grandmas shaping and develop the project and taking ownership of the project. This topic of feeling as though they owned the project was talked about as a positive experience by the grandmas during the evaluation.

There were two parts to the programme that were successful but not sustainable. The fruit infused water served lunchtime and improving nutritionally poor packed lunches. Although both activities were successful, they could not be maintained in school. Having the fruit infused water jugs was successful with the children but it created extra work for the kitchen staff, included all 5 grandmas and myself to keep the jugs filled and pouring into cups as they were too heavy for some children to lift. This activity fitted in with Severn Trent water's activities day in the school with the promotion of drinking water during lunchtime.

An extension of the project would be to see if the grandmas could work on improving packed lunches. The nutritionist from the Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetics service took away a few Indian recipes that the grandmas had given her for ideas for lunch boxes and the nutritionist is adapting them and putting them in a leaflet. The grandmas also translated the current lunch box leaflets into Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi.

It was important to consider, time constraints within the project management of the inter-generational project. Time limitations and constraints must be at the forefront of managing a project within a school environment. This included fitting the project into the school calendar, the various school activities and fitting into curriculum time, curriculum planning and consider school holidays. I also had to fit these constraints into the funding time frame from the Big Lottery. I had to balance these points within the co design model which requires the project to adapt from issues raised during the reflective cycle in the co-design approach. Time constraints in school and the management of the project is something that will be highlighted in the advice to other schools in setting up a project like this.

Activities such as gardening were named as being an effective element to use when reducing loneliness. Gardening is classed as moderate activity of which Public Health England and NHS England (2016) recommend 150 minutes moderate exercise each week and being outside will also increase vitamin D levels.

Initially the grandmas signed a volunteer policy that the school use for people coming into school (appendix 5). Following discussions with the Food for Life Lead and the Headteacher, it was decided that the grandmas would do the STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths) training. Not only does this training give advice on how to deliver lessons in school, one automatically receives a CRB check alongside. The grandmas loved this training and were very proud to receive and wear their badges. This also means they can be called into other schools to help. This helped with the confidence of the grandmas.

The grandmas attended 'The Food for Life Better Care National Conference: learning from co-designed solutions to improve quality of later life through food' in May. Together we presented the project at a workshop (appendix 4). This was a major achievement and a measure of how the grandma's confidence had grown. They spoke to attendees and presenters and enjoyed the whole experience. They took part in a short film that was shown at the conference. Also, ITN came to the school and filmed the grandmas in the dining hall and cooking with the children. This was also a measure of the grandma's confidence and achievements.

During the interview with the grandma's it was lovely to hear that they felt that they had learnt a lot from the project. The grandmas really enjoyed and most satisfaction from helping with the cutlery skills. This is because one could observe instantly the change in the ability of the children.

Conclusion and Recommendations.

Aims Objectives and Outcomes

Aims of the project

- Improve social exclusion with the grandma's group.
- Increase activity in the grandma's group
- Improve healthy eating outcomes of both younger and older participants.

These aims were met.

Objectives of the project

- Improve intergenerational work within the school setting
- Increase in knowledge around cooking skills in school.
- Improve knowledge around food growing and how to cook with produce in school.
- Improve use of cutlery in the Reception children.

These objectives were met.

Outcomes:

- Influence the health outcomes of older persons by educating them to help and assist the younger generation in their health decisions.
- An improvement in children trying new foods through cooking activities
- Children will be encouraged to eat more vegetables for their lunchtime meal.
- An improvement in social inclusion for the older participants.
- There is the passing on of skills within the intergenerational work
- An improvement in children's knife and fork skills.
- An improvement in cooking skills and knowledge for children at school.
- An improvement in gardening at the school, connecting where food comes from to the food eaten.

The outcomes were all met except for the influencing healthy eating with the grandmas.

This was discussed in this document. By nature of the fact that the grandmas volunteered to participate was an indication that they already had an interest in health and wellbeing. Indeed, the participants were already eating healthy and had an interest in health issues.

The positive effects of the project.

The positive effects for the grandmas;

- Increase in learning of new information and skills.
- Increase in social inclusion and making new friends.
- Co design approach led to the feeling of empowerment for the grandmas.
- Enjoyment of being with the children.
- Increase in activity
- Volunteering gives a sense of pride and positive self-image
- Feeling a sense of purpose and accomplishment from seeing the progress in the children.

The positive effect for the children;

- With the help of the grandmas, the children can remain focused on their food and eat more and better.
- Children feel more confident and are willing to try new food.
- The grandmas also interact with the older children, which contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere in the dining room.
- Learning to hold and use knives and forks help children to develop the necessary motor skills for writing.
- Grandmas create a homely feeling in the dining hall.
- Passing on skills
- Easing the work load for school staff,
- Learning about heritage through food
- Learning new vocabulary
- Learning whilst having fun.

Advice to schools

- Focus on who you will target to become volunteers. Are they an existing group? Or are you developing a group?
- Group cohesion is important together with having shared beliefs on health and wellbeing.
- Consider using codesign.

- Have a method of feeding back to staff at the school, any observations noted about lunch times or what particular children have found difficult at lunchtimes.
- Members of the group may not be used to being in a school and attending school meals regularly will get them used to being in school at lunchtimes.
- Consider the school calendar and any training needs of participants when planning to start. Have in mind if any of the volunteers would also like to do cooking and or gardening in school.
- Inform midday school supervisors, receptionists and Senior Leadership Team about the project and the timeline.
- Inform the parents at the beginning of the project. Invite them in to have lunch with the children. Produce a leaflet for them on how to encourage good cutlery skills at home.
- Be aware of how to measure success and take a base level of abilities and knife and fork skills. Consider observational analysis by key people.
- Be aware of religious and cultural aspects of the school population
- Plan some initial costings of the volunteers having a school meal. Consider any costings for ingredients for cooking and plants and seeds for food growing.
- Plan training on; cutlery skills (appendix 2), sign the school volunteer policy (appendix 5), include a talk on safeguarding or arrange for the STEM ambassador training. If the volunteers are teaching cooking, then volunteers need to attend cooking skills training.
- Meet regularly throughout the project.

What could be better

- The logistics of having fruit infused water in jugs needs to be considered.
- The grandmas were concerned about the poor nutritional quality of packed lunches, but this needs to be addressed by the school.
- There was no real effect on the health of the grandmas but small changes in their diets were made and they influenced their grandchildren's food choices. There was no improvement in their belief of the use of salt for taste.

Bibliography

- Centre for Ageing Better (2016) *Transforming Later Lives*. www.ageing-better.org.uk/transforming-later-lives
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018). *A Connected Society. A strategy for tackling Loneliness- Laying the Foundation for Change*. HM Treasury. London.
- Department of Education (2019). *Health Schools Rating Scheme. Guidance for Schools*. HM Treasury. London.
- Department of Health (2016). *The Childhood Obesity strategy: a plan for action*, updated 2017. HM Treasury. London.
- Food for Life. 2015. *Making Britain Healthier Through Food*. What we can do for you. Soil Association. www.foodforlife.org.uk
- Innovation Unit (2016). *How can we ensure that older people have better access to nutritious food and company?* Insight Report.
- Jones, LJ. (1994) *The Social Context for Health and Health Work*. Macmillan.
- Leicester Children & Young People's Health Profile 2015. www.Leicester.gov.uk
- Leicester City's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016. www.Leicester.gov.uk
- Public Health England and NHS England (2016). *A guide to community centred approaches*. HM Treasury. London.
- Public Health England (2018). *Community-centres practice: applying All Our Health*. HM Treasury. London.
- St Monica Trust. (2018). *Intergenerational Activity. How to be a part of it and why*. St Monica Trust. Bristol.
- United for all ages (2019). *The Next Generation: how intergenerational interaction improves life chances of children and young people*. United for all ages. Norfolk
- What Works Well (2018). *Tackling Loneliness*. www.whatworkswellbeing.org
- WHO (2016), *Ending Childhood Obesity implementation plan*. WHO <https://www.who.int/end-childhood-obesity/publications>
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-profile-for-england-2018/chapter-6-wider-determinants
- www.nuffieldbioethics.org/report/public-health-2/public-health-chapter-5-obesity (2014).

Appendices

Appendix 1

Dear

Thank you for your interest in coming in to our school to help our pupils. Our school is working with Food for Life to improve the health of our children and your help will be greatly appreciated. Intergenerational work helps our children with their learning and so together with our school food team we would like to have your expertise to help us teach basic cooking skills in school. Training will be given so that you will be familiar with how cooking is taught on the curriculum together with healthy eating messages and recipes.

We would also like to ask for your help with our younger pupils aged 4 and 5 years old during the lunchtime period at the start of September. Some children have difficulty eating their school meal, they may not have fed themselves before or have never used a knife and fork. These are essential skills for social dining and are indeed life skills. Training will also be given, and a school meal provided as you will be modelling these skills for the children.

Lisa Didier from Food for Life is helping us with our project and so we would like to have an initial meeting with you, following which some training dates will be organised. We would like to have an initial meeting this Thursday 7th June at 1.30.

If you can attend on the 7th May please tick

If you are interested but cannot attend on the 7th May please tick

Please add your name _____

Please add your contact details _____

For further information please contact Panna on reception or Lisa Didier
Ldidier@soilassociation.org 07718570945

We look forward to working together with you. Thank you.



Appendix 2

Developing the skills to use cutlery



Children who have difficulty with coordination often will have difficulty with cutting, lifting and coordinating using a knife and fork. Additionally, children who have decreased fine motor skills find it difficult to manipulate a fork, knife or spoon to pick up or scoop food to feed themselves.

To start there are several key factors that you can arrange and control that will help.

1. Positioning.

Check if they are sat properly. The type of seating arrangements in school is not ideal but check to see if the child can move to a better position on the chair.

They need to be facing the table straight on and as the chairs are permanent, check if they need to move towards the table themselves.

If the child seems to not want to hold a knife and fork place the cutlery correctly in the child's hand.

If a child is still having difficulty, allow them to hold a fork or spoon and hold the plate in the other hand.

2. Positive Mealtime experiences

A positive meal time experience will make the child feel more comfortable eating at school.

Use positive language and congratulate them when they have tried even a small amount of food.

The children will follow your lead, explain what you are doing and how you are doing it and the child will try and copy you.

Try and assess if the child might respond to stickers. If so we can arrange for stickers to be available. Please discuss this with the lunchtime staff.

3. Stories

Stories may also help to understand why it is important and necessary to use cutlery.

It may also help a child to understand why sometimes you can use cutlery and why sometimes it is okay to use your hands, for example when eating an apple, chapati or sandwich

Talk about different textures of food and how difficult it is to cut and how hard you need to press.

4. Senses

Engage different senses. If the child does not want to try food, try touching the food, describing what it's like, smelling the food, for example.

5. Cutting skills

As a rule, the child should hold the knife in their dominant hand.

Get the child to practice holding the food still with the fork and then cutting softer food first using backwards and forwards movement with the knife.

If the child has difficulty with this, you could hold the fork together.

If the food is harder, you could cut the food into smaller pieces to make it easier for them. To increase the pressure being used, encourage the child to put their index fingers along the back of the cutlery.

When cutting food, we adjust the knife with our hands several times. Children tend to hold the knife tightly and do not adjust it. Encourage movement of the knife in their hand. This will encourage better control and the ability to monitor grip.

Remember that this is a life-long skill and therefore you should allow time for skills to develop.

Appendix 3

18th June 2019. Transcription of interview with Grandmas. 5 participants named 1-5, 1=Sha, 2, Jay, 3, Rav, 4, Gur, 5, Ros

Me, Question: Out of the cutlery skills, cooking, gardening, hydration station and all the other things we have done in school, what did you learn and how did your knowledge increase?

1. I learnt about the cooking, how to handle the knives correctly.

2. How to teach the kids as well

3. We had the old habits

All. (All agree)....yes

1. We used it to teach the children, but we learnt ourselves.

4. We knew the skills but didn't know the specific names and it's important to get it right for the children.....even we learnt safety

2. And the hydration station, we learnt at home. The mint and orange one, my two grandchildren have that and take it to school now.

Me: That's great.

3. I learnt about even just water, how much benefit it is to children.

2. the grandchildren have finished their water by the time they come home, they didn't used to.

4. There's no sugar in there, nothing.

3. It's really good for children, for us as well.

All. Yes..all laugh

4. There's nutrients in the water from the fruit.

All.yes.

5. I learnt from the cooking. I didn't know little children would be so interested in cooking. They loved it, and they were so excited and almost everybody wanted to cook. We should be really helpful for this project that little children have in their minds to cook and learning new things

Me: yes and unofficially, we shamed the school into doing more cooking. Since you started doing sessions in school, it showed that the children wanted it and that it was ok to teach cooking.

5. It was eye opening for the teachers too, years ago it was thereand people just taught cooking. Young teachers are coming up, they don't want to cook and maybe can't cook.... and they can't pass skills to the children. I just think it's great that children are showing the interest in cooking.

4. we tried to influence the cooks as well telling them what was good in the cooking, what the children liked. I think we did a little bit of good there as well.

2. And the gardening

All: oh yes, the gardening. Yes.

4. the children had watering cans everywhere.

1. They liked gardening

2. oh they did.

3. and that little girl.

5. She wanted to do everything. She wanted to water, dig and plant.

3. She was good with it.....she wanted to learn more.

5. It's not only that, when they go back to class....they must talk to each other. They must tell the others what they did outside and they might encourage the others.

All: discuss about the plants in school and if everyone is watering the plants everyday.

5. I'm worried about the cucumbers.

All talking at once about the strawberries and other veg they planted. And that the grandmas that pick up the children every day from school had noticed that the beans had been eating by insects.

Me Question: Out of all the activities that we did, which ones did you enjoy?

3. All of them.

1. The cutlery skills.

5. Yes it was very interesting.

2. You feel so happy that they are doing it properly.

3. We are coming first, nobody knew anything and now they can.

5. Especially when they come to you and say, look I can do this now.

1. and now they can feed themselves. If they can't cut the food, they can't feed themselves, they stay hungry all the time.

5. They were very proud that they could do it.

All. yes, yes.

5. I'm sure when they go home, they must be feeding back and the day that we had the parents coming in.....it was also very fruitful. It was very strange to see that some of them (parents) didn't know themselves.....do you remember.....it's not only Indian.....they (parents) were saying....look what the teacher is showing you how do it.

3. And they (parents) were quite interested in learning too.

4. Hopefully when the kids are back home they tell the parents what they've learned.

5. I'm sure when they took the sandwiches home that we made with the little ones. They showed them (parents). Then when we made the chickpea curry. I just wanted to know if maybe we could have asked to the children if they asked their parents if they'd liked the things they'd made.....you know some feedback from the children.

Me: Question. Do you think your views on health have changed or did you learn anything?

4. When we did the cooking, we had to know about some of the nutrients as well. I mean it said chickpea curry, but we put so many vegetables in it.

5. yes but the aubergine didn't cook properly.

All; talking laughing.

3. that was the highlight (laughing)

Me; you mean my lowlight.... (I choose the aubergines and the grandmas told me off as aubergines don't cook as quickly as other veg.

1. Also we know that everyone cooks differently at home. It's the same dish but everyone does it differently.

4. you know it was from chickpeas we get protein from tomatoes we get this, so we were learning as well.

5. And another thing, when you're teaching them the knives and forks, you do talk about the food as well. You know if you eat your beans, they're full of protein.

All; talking at the same time....oh yes and peas make you stronger.

Me: Question. Did you have an impression about what school meals were like before you started?

All talk.....they were good, I'd expect them to be good....it has be healthy because of obesity.

4. They don't put salt in the food.

5. That was a surprise to me. I didn't expect that.

1. yes since the Jamie Oliver thing came out.

5. They only thing was that the little ones expected the same food on the same day and it wasn't like that.

All talking.....agreeing and talking about the different dishes.

5. was it psychological... did different dishes taste differently psychologically if they were not expecting it.

Me Question: From the start of the project to now, what would you say about your confidence?

4. Well I mean, me especially, I'm just a housewife, I never go out, I only go shopping, I'd never been to school, only to drop off children. You really encouraged me.

All talking...

Me, but you have a lot of skills.

4. yes but for me my confidence has grown, I look forward to going to school, you learn so many things and it makes you active, you know when you know you have to be somewhere it makes you get your things in order.

5. For me, I got confidence talking in front of the camera. I mean I can talk in front of anyone but in front of the camera, especially when you know everyone is going to look at you.

All talking and agreeing.

5. but put me in front of anything now and I'll talk.

4. When is the next one...We have made lovely friends, we met Lisa...she's like an angel...she's looked after us

5. Not only that we met people from the lottery

All talking, yes we have met loads of people....all talking.

3. we didn't know many other people at Manchester (when they gave the presentation at the national conference) and straight away we were talking to everyone.

4. I didn't have many friends and now I have so many.

Me: Did anything surprise you about being at school.

2. oh I was shocked the first time I went into school for a school meal....how do they cope with so many children at one time.

5, the thing is, it goes smoothly.

Me; and now you don't think about it.

All...no

2. I'd never seen so many children all at once.

1. they're all so lovely...the children.

2. the first time I entered there I said, where do I start..

4, you don't have that experience with children.

All talking.....at once.

5. everybody has something to offer....nobody is perfect.

5. Although we were there for the cutlery and encourage eating, we did have a look at the lunch boxes.....I was shocked to see them.....I mean at first we were just focused on the young children but then when we could help the older ones, I didn't realise the state of the lunch boxes....most of them never had a nice lunch box

1. some of them had really nice ones...but others

3, I mean, one had a piece of bread and a chocolate.....just plain bread, no butter....how can the kids eat that...why the parents don't think..it's my child and then give them nice food.

1. and the prices of the meals went up when we were there

4. there'll be more on the packed lunch now.

5. the special needs children.....I'm glad they had one to one person with them to help them to eat.....my hats off to those ladies.....The children at the event last week had more skills (schools had displays of their food for life work at a Food for Life celebration event that the grandmas attended).....they won didn't they, they had cooked what they'd brought....it's great for those types of children.....

4. There was a little girl in school that only had white food wasn't there.

Me, Question. What have been the highlights.

All talking....meeting you...laughing....all talking. Going to Manchester.

5. Ah we enjoyed it and the venue.

All...talking....

5. My highlight in school.....

1. Without you we would never have gone there.

3. there were so many teachers who wanted us to go to them....

5. I said oh you need to see Lisa

1. the school from ????? she came and she said I know you....we saw you on the TV....she said how wonderful, why don't you do this in every school....I said we'll have chop ourselves into little pieces.

3, not many others are doing it.

5. THE highlight is that so many others are interested.

4. We all felt part of what was going on. We never planned anything beforehand...it was at the meetings, we were part of it and we could make suggestions and how we could change things.

5. It changed many times

All laughing...

4. It was like our project, not Lisa's project.

Me: I'm so pleased as that's how I wanted it.

5. that's down to you (Lisa)....you could have said...no I'm the boss but you you took in everyone's views and we all mucked in.

3, you (Lisa) made everyone comfortable....

4, We are getting all the attention but it was you (Lisa) behind it.

5, you gave us the liberty to say something, and we knew if said something and you didn't like it or think it was good....that's when you said....I think we might give this way a try.....I think you did that cleverly.....and politically well.

All laughing.

4. If we wanted to change anything you were very subtle about it.....If it was someone else who was a bit stiff lipped I don't think it would have worked....but with Lisa you felt like you could talk....she was so friendly.

5. we weren't tense.

All talking.

Interview finished

27th June interview with 7 Reception Children.

Me; The grandmas have been coming in since when you started in Septemeber.

All talking.....yes ...yes.

Boy 1, I'm 5 already.

Me, You were 4 then and now you're 5

All talking.....about random things.

Me; What about lunchtimes with the grandmas,

Girl 1, I loved them.

Girl 2 I did,

Boy 2, I did

Boy 3, I didn't.

Girl 1. When I couldn't cut things, they helped me. When I couldn't cut the cheese flan, they helped me because it was hard.

Girl 2..and me....the grannies helped me because the bottom bit was hard.

Boy, 1 they helped me..

Me, Question to boy 3, Why weren't you keen on the grandmas?

Boy 3...because I can cut on my own.

Me, so you could cut food before you started school.

Me. Question, so at home....do you use a knife and fork?

All....yes.. except one who said no.....my mum feeds me.

Me..oh I see.

Girl 2..sometimes my mum cuts everything up for me so that I only use a fork....but sometimes I use a spoon and fork.

Me...well that's not how we do it at school....it's different at home...

Girl 1...I eat things at home that I can eat with my hands.....but by myself...I only eat roti and chadd or Dai (Chapati and dahl)

All telling me how to pronounce it correctly....

Me; what do you think about lunchtimes when there's something special on like Halloween.....

Girl 2...it was scary...

Girl 1, well just the decorations were scary....

Girl 2...I cried. (I was there and I don't remember anyone crying, in fact the inverse, they were so excited about the decorations).

Me Question: Do you remember when you first started, what did you think about going in to the hall for lunch for the first time?

Girl 1, I was so worried.....

Girl 2, I was fine the first day, but the next day.. I cried....then school dinners I didn't like them.

Me, but do you like them now.....I've seen you eating them.

Girl 2....yes, first I didn't but now I have school dinners

Me, that's great....what did you think when you first arrived in school and had school dinners

Girl 2, first I was worried and then I was happy.....when I went back in the class.....then when I went home I liked it.

Me, What about the boys.....what did you think in September.....where you ok with lunchtimes ...

Boy 1, when my class left, there was only the big children left and I was worried.

Me: and what did you think of the food..

Boy 2. I was worried because I didn't want to eat everything.

Me, what helped you to eat...

Boy 2, I liked the beans.

Girl 1. You know the chapati and chaat.... (dahl) riceI don't like it.....I tried it.....so I just eat what I like.

Me, that's a good plan.

Girl 2. I love fish and chip Friday.

All talk....I don't like fish.....I like it....

Boy.....I like the little ones ...like nuggets.....the little fish ones.

Me, oh yes.....Now, what did you cook with the grandmas.....

All talking at once as some had made banana sandwiches with the grandmas and others had made salad.....and then about cooking they'd done with the teachers.

Me, what was the best bit about cooking with the grandmas...

Girl 2, remember when I said can we do the potatoes now....

Girl 1. I liked piecing the lettuce thing.

Me, do you think the grandmas know a lot about cooking...

Girl1...you know one grandma.....she holded the grate and I grated the carrot.....that was good....because I couldn't hold it.....because I didn't have strong hands that much

Boy 1....I can grate

Boy3, I love grating...

Girl 3. I cut the potato

Girl 1, I like when we cutting the vegetables and we made a fruit salad.

Girl 2. My favourite bit was when the grandmas were showing us all the fruit and vegetables.

Me, What about the boys.....what did you like about cooking with the grandmas..

Boy 2, everything

All talk at once....what they liked making and what they have made at school and at home.

Girl 1. I've made biscuits with my grandma

Me. What was the best thing that you enjoyed with the grandmas....

All talk at once..

Me, did you enjoy having the grandmas in school....

All....yes yesyes..

Girl 2, I liked cooking with the grandma

Boy 3, I remember now I made banana sandwiches.

Two start singing.....

Ended the recording.

Appendix 4

Slide 1

FOOD FOR LIFE
Better Care
MAKING BRITAIN HEALTHIER THROUGH FOOD

“We love it when the grandmas are here”

16th May 2019
Lisa Didier, Local Programme manager Food for Life

Slide 2

How it started.


- Sandfield Close Primary School, Leicester City.
- Bronze Food for Life award
- Established group.
- Changes in school
- New group
- Meeting with group from Easter to end of term July 2018.
- Lots of ideas; cooking and gardening with children.

Slide 3

Co design.

```
graph TD; A[School Priorities] --> B[Food for Life Priorities]; B --> C[Grandma's Ideas and Opinions]; C --> D[Outline of Task]; D --> E[Debrief and changes to be made]; E --> A;
```

Slide 4

The little bird project 

- Priority for the school.
- Knife and fork skills priority for Reception children in September 2018.
- Eating with children (FFL model) versus needs of children.
- 60 Reception Children.
- 5 could eat with a knife and fork, a further 10 could hold a knife a fork.
- Once a week up to February half term.
- By Christmas all the children were using a knife and fork to some degree.
- Ripple effect on other pupils.

Slide 5



Slide 6



Slide 7



Slide 8




Slide 9



Slide 10

Cooking in school.



- Grandma's learned how teachers deliver cooking skills in the curriculum.
- Could have done more cooking in school.
- However, it demonstrated to teachers to have confidence to deliver within the school curriculum. School developed cooking skills curriculum.
- Children loved cooking with the grandma's and asked if they could do this every week.

Slide 11




Slide 12



Slide 13


STEM Ambassadors



- STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from a wide range of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related jobs and disciplines across the UK. They offer their time and enthusiasm to help bring STEM subjects to life and demonstrate the value of them in life and careers.
- Free training including DBS application and certificate.

Slide 14

Hydration Station




- Grandma's were concerned that the children were not drinking enough water.
- In conjunction with Severn Trent water, it was decided that Severn Trent would bring their learning lorries and activities into school.
- To continue with the 'water learning' at lunchtime, the grandmas set up a 'hydration station' at the back of the dining hall.
- 5 diffusion jugs with; lemon, lime and lemongrass, mint, orange and lemon in them.
- School bought some new cups to allow children to try a few of the flavours.

Slide 15



Slide 16



Grandparents Gardening Week

- A plan to include: what grows well in school time and linking food growing to what the cook can use in the school meals and what the children use for cooking in the curriculum.
- Grandma's worked with children over the lunchtime period and some children were allowed to stay into the afternoon.
- This was over two lunch times and afternoons and planning for a third /fourth session to cover all of the planting.
- The Grandmas will deliver a 'how to look after the plants' session in school to a few children in each class.

Slide 17

Planting garlicIn the Solar Dome



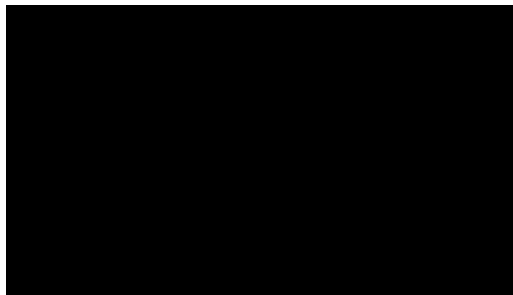
Slide 18



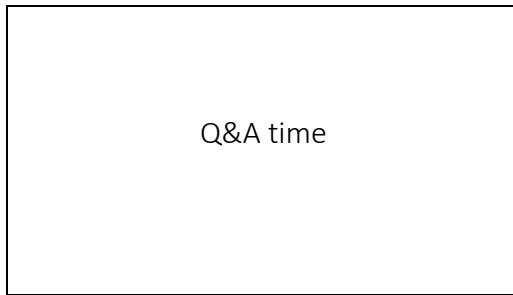
Slide 19



Slide 20



Slide 21



Slide 22

For more information contact

Lisa Didier
ldidier@soilassociation.org



Sandfield Close Primary School Volunteer Policy



This policy was **revised in December 2012**.

Reviewed: January 2017

Date of next review January 2020.

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community to work in partnership with the school to promote **positive** outcomes for all our children.

Our definition of Volunteers includes:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students
- Former members of staff
- Members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Local residents

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged in include:

- Reading with children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children within classrooms
- Undertaking art & craft activities with children
- Running after-school clubs
- Assist with administrative tasks
- Working with children on the computers
- Helping maintain the school grounds
- Accompanying school visits
- Organising and supervising PTA events
- Charity events

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing children read, usually approaches the School Business Manager in the first instance.

Volunteers are asked to put their request in writing explaining why they wish to volunteer at the school, the skills they have to offer, the approximate length of time of each session and the likely duration of the placement and if relevant the course and institution which the placement relates to. Volunteers should also complete the *Volunteer Information Sheet* (Appendix 1) with their contact details, type of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

Before starting to help in school, all volunteers are expected to apply for and obtain an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. **No volunteers are allowed in school on a regular basis unless they have received satisfactory DBS clearance.** An exception to this is when parents are asked to accompany school trips on a one-off basis and assist with the supervision of the children. The School Business Manager is responsible for all DBS applications connected with the school and maintains the Single Central Record relating to DBS checks and suitability to work with children.

Staff employed at the school are expected to conduct themselves in line with the guidance contained in the DfE document ***Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings & Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016)*** at all times. Volunteers are expected to follow the same guidelines. **A copy will be given to the volunteer at the start of the placement.**

The school has an Acceptable Use Policy relating to the use of the school ICT network and all members of staff are expected to sign a copy of the AUP. Volunteers are expected to sign the Volunteer AUP. Any breach of the AUP will be reported to the appropriate external agencies and appropriate action taken.

Our School Vision

All adults who work in our school, whether as a paid member of staff or a volunteer are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school vision.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with or come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child or persons outside school.

Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the School Business Manager or Headteacher.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the day-to-day supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. The School Business Manager and Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have regular oversight of the activities of all volunteers.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the class teacher as to how an activity is carried out / what the expected outcome of an activity is.

Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice or guidance from the class teacher in the event of any query or problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request to Volunteers working in the school. The School Business Manager briefs volunteers on key Health & Safety issues at the start of the activity or placement. On a day-to-day basis class teachers and other school staff ensure that Volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation, **invacuation**) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using DT equipment or accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher, a member of staff or directly to the School Business Manager or Headteacher. Any accidents should be reported directly to the School Business Manager so that the appropriate documentation can be completed.

Child Protection

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all our regular Volunteers must have been cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS). A certificate is issued to the individual to produce in school.
- The principles of Safer Recruitment apply to all staff employed by the school and the same key principles are applied to Volunteers at the school.
- All adults in school are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the DfE document ***Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings & Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016)***.
- **In the event of an allegation of abuse being made about a Volunteer, it will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer who is based in the Social Care and Safeguarding Division of Leicester City Council. This policy applies to all adults working in school whether they are employees or volunteers.**

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a Volunteer will be referred to the School Business Manager or Headteacher for investigation.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class;
- Inform the Volunteer that the school is no longer willing to offer a placement. The school has adopted the Leicester City Complaints Procedure.

Terminating the placement

Some Volunteers remain active at the school over a period of years, for others the placement is time-limited perhaps in conjunction with a course. Placements usually end by mutual agreement, however the Headteacher and School Business Manager reserve the right to terminate the placement at any time if it is no longer perceived to be in the best interests of the school. The school is not obliged to explain why the placement has been terminated.

Requests for references based on Volunteer placements at the school

Only the Headteacher and School Business Manager are in a position to write references for Volunteers. Other members of staff have been told that they should decline any requests to provide references. If a Volunteer wishes to use the school as a referee they should discuss the request with the Headteacher or School Business Manager before an application is made. If the application has not been discussed with the school in advance, it is unlikely that the school will agree to provide a reference. **References will not**

normally be given more than one year after the end of the Volunteer placement at the school. In line with Safer Recruitment and Child Protection guidance a reference written by the school in respect of Volunteering activity may be very limited in content.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually and updated in the light of new guidance from either the DfE or LA. It will be made available to parents and the wider community via the school website.

The Sandfield Close Volunteer Policy was discussed and adopted at a meeting of the full governing body.

Date of meeting: _____

Signature of Chair of Governors: _____

**APPENDIX 1
VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET – FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS**

Name of Volunteer: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Other names known by (including maiden names):

Address: _____

Phone: _____

What skills / areas would you like to help with in school?

Are there any particular age groups / classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any disabilities / other needs which we need to consider when offering you a placement as a Volunteer in school? *(please give details)*

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Information Sheet. Please return it to the School Business Manager with a letter of application.

Your offer of help is appreciated, and we will be in touch shortly.

Good Food Matters for People in Later Life

The Food for Life Better Care National Conference: *learning from co-designed solutions to improve quality of later life through food*

Date: Thursday 16th May 2019

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm (registration opens at 9.30am and the conference will start at 10.10am)

Venue: The Monastery, Gorton Lane, Manchester M12 5WF

<https://www.themonastery.co.uk/directionstofindyourwaytothemonastery/>

Cost: This conference is free to attend which has been made possible through The National Lottery Community Fund. Registration is essential. If you have registered and can no longer attend the conference, please contact us as soon as possible to enable another person to use your place.

Chair: Joanna Lewis, Policy and Strategy Director, Soil Association

Themes: Food in later life; malnutrition; loneliness; cross-generational links; therapeutic food activities; mealtimes; co-design; ethnographic research; food for health and wellbeing; community cohesion; quality of later life; whole setting approach to food in care homes; food in the community; eating well in hospital

About this conference

Funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, the Food for Life Better Care programme has enabled testing, learning, failing and innovating in three UK localities, using food as the vehicle for [bringing communities together](#), preventing malnutrition, and [tackling loneliness for people in later life](#). We've captured how [co-designed](#), [holistic good food practices](#) can bring joy and happiness, [opportunities to socialise](#), and improve physical and mental wellbeing for individuals, organisations and communities.

Working in partnership with a wide range of organisations, the Food for Life Better Care programme has developed innovative whole setting approaches and holistic food approaches that support the health and wellbeing of older people in hospitals, living the community, and living in care homes.

This conference will present independent programme evaluation conducted by the University of the West of England and will share powerful person-centred stories of impact through co-designed food-based interventions.

What will you learn?

Join us to learn about the following:

1. How **meaningful, purposeful and sustainable intergenerational links** using food can be created between education settings and care homes, and with older people living in the community, with benefits from all. Examples include health and social care students working with a care setting, a school working with local grandmas to support food education, and

- nurseries and care homes working together regularly using therapeutic food activities to develop friendships across generations.
2. How food can be used as a **solution for health, wellbeing, community cohesion**, improving quality in health and social care, developing skills within care, and bringing people of differing background, ages, faiths and cultures together for the benefit of all.
 3. How ethnographic research and person-centred approaches have demonstrated **how food-related issues are experienced by people**, and have enhanced knowledge around the role of food for wellbeing.
 4. How food growing, cooking and hen keeping as **therapeutic food activities** in later life can make a difference to wellbeing, and how these approaches can be delivered through training and support.
 5. How **mealtimes and dining spaces** can be improved to support the nutritional and social needs of older people in care and in hospitals.
 6. How care settings can take a **whole setting approach to good food** through themes such as leadership, the **quality of the food served**, food growing, food reminiscence activities, staff training and wellbeing, and intergenerational links and community engagement.
 7. How you can engage with Food for Life to use this learning in your area.

Wider benefits for you and your organisation

This will be no ordinary conference! Food for Life works to create space for change, co-design solutions, and deliver change using practical, engaging and innovative approaches. At the conference you will have the opportunity to:

- Hear from beneficiaries of the programme
- Engage in practical food activities
- Join in the conversation and network with people and organisations closely involved in the programme.
- Hear from independent evaluators of the programme
- See the resources developed through the programme
- Find out how to get your area and organisation involved and be part of future action in this space
- Quiz experts who have developed the Food for Life Better Care solutions

Programme outline

- 09:30 Registration opens. Refreshments available. Opportunities to talk with experts and engage in a food activity.
- 10:10 Welcome from our conference Chair, Joanna Lewis, Policy and Strategy Director, Soil Association
- 10:20 Keynote presentation – what are the key issues associated with food in later life?
- 10:45 The co-design approach – how testing, failing, learning and iterating created solutions that work
- 10:55 Break. Refreshments available. Opportunities to talk with experts and engage in a food activity.

- 11:10 Approach to food in care homes and creating intergenerational connections. Impact and learning from independent evaluators, beneficiaries and the Food for Life local programme team.
- 11:40 Workshop 1 (Choose from four themes: intergenerational links; care homes and food; food and later life in the community; food and later life in hospitals)
- 12:15 Lunch. Refreshments available. Opportunities to talk with experts and engage in a food activity.
- 01:15 Food and people in later life in the community. Impact and learning from independent evaluators, beneficiaries and the Food for Life local programme team.
- 01:30 Eating together in hospital. Impact and learning from independent evaluators, beneficiaries and the Food for Life local programme team.
- 01:40 Workshop 2 (Choose from four themes: intergenerational links; care homes and food; food and later life in the community; food and later life in hospitals)
- 02:15 Break. Refreshments available. Opportunities to talk with experts and engage in a food activity.
- 02:30 The Food for Life Better Care Programme Legacy – What’s next?
- 02:45 Questions for the panel followed by closing remarks
- 03:30 Close

Book your place now

- [Eventbrite link](#)

