SCHOOL FOOD PROJECT

EXPLORER SCHOOLS

Setting the standard for the school food every child deserves



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Brought to you by

The Food Foundation · CHEFS IN SCHOOLS · BITE BACK · SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS · JAMIE OLIVER

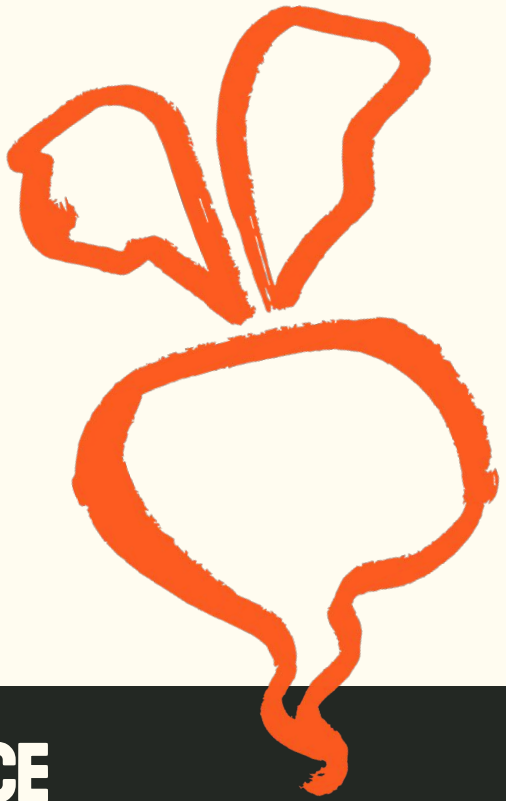
WELCOME AND PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

WELCOME TO THE SCHOOL FOOD PROJECT

The School Food Project brings together five leading food and education organisations to transform school food and food education across England. The project supports primary, secondary, all-through, SEND, and PRU schools to create healthier environments, serve nutritious meals that children love, and enable high-quality food education.

WHAT IS AN EXPLORER SCHOOL?

An Explorer School is a school that's ready to make food a bigger part of school life, wherever it's starting from. Explorers join a regional network in London and the North West, working side by side with Beacon Schools, our hub schools, on their own journey to improve school food culture. You're an Explorer if you're in the same area as a Beacon School, or part of the same multi-academy trust, federation, diocesan family or cluster.



You'll get expert training and coaching for your team, regional workshops and planning sessions, and peer learning with Beacon Schools and fellow Explorer Schools as you build your food policy and pupil-led food projects. It's delivered in a way that fits around the realities of school life, so your team can make real progress without it taking over. Whatever your set-up, whether that's an external caterer, a small site or a food culture that's just taking shape, Explorer is built for you.

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

The Explorer programme is fully funded and involves your whole school, from senior leaders to pupils.

COST: Free to participating schools

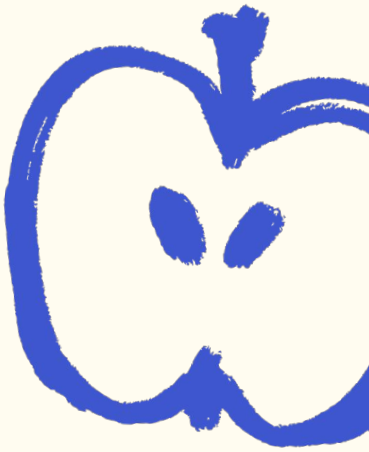
WHERE: London and the North West

FORMAT: Hybrid with in-person, group online sessions, and digital resources

WHO TAKES PART: Senior leaders, teachers, catering staff and pupils

DELIVERED BY: Bite Back, Chefs in Schools, Jamie Oliver Group, School Food Matters and The Food Foundation, together as the School Food Project

EXPLORER SCHOOLS OVERVIEW



WHAT YOU GET

To support a whole-school approach, the School Food Project is delivered across five specialised strands, each led by an expert partner, so change reaches the kitchen, the classroom, the garden and the school community.

STRAND	LED BY	WHAT YOUR SCHOOL GETS
Catering Excellence	Chefs in Schools	A six-week School Chef Educator programme with 10-15 kitchen staff from Beacon and Explorer schools. This hybrid course combines in-person training and inspiring practical sessions with weekly webinars and self-guided learning, and finishes with a celebration day at your local Beacon School.
Food Culture & Leadership	School Food Matters (Nourish)	A kick-off call, leadership survey and school food review to identify your priorities. An in-person workshop at your local Beacon School to turn your findings into a practical action plan. Access to digital resources and training, governor workshops and support to create your school food policy, plus a legacy action plan to track and sustain progress.
Growing and Enterprise	School Food Matters (Young Marketeers)	Short videos with practical tips on growing and selling your own fruit and vegetables, plus teaching guides and growing toolkits to get started. Pupils then put their skills into practice by running their own market at a summer fair or after-school event.
Student Voice	Bite Back	An inspiring assembly led by a youth ambassador (live online or pre-recorded), an hour of virtual training for staff leads, ongoing drop-in support, workbooks and resources delivered to your school. Pupils lead their own campaigns for change through the School Council, before celebrating together at a group assembly at your local Beacon School.
Food Education	Jamie Oliver Group	Full online access to the Jamie Oliver 10 Skills cooking curriculum, including video tutorials, ready-to-go lesson plans, age-appropriate recipes, worksheets and scheme of learning. Built-in assessment tools make it easy to track progress, and every pupil who completes the course receives a certificate.

EXPLORER SCHOOLS OVERVIEW

WHO'S INVOLVED IN YOUR SCHOOL?

The Explorer programme is designed to fit your capacity: one senior leader to champion it, and a few staff to lead each strand.

ROLE	SUGGESTED PERSON	WHAT THEY DO
SLT Champion	Headteacher, deputy or assistant head	Leads the school's participation in the programme as the main point of contact, connecting food to wider school policy and joining cluster calls.
Catering Lead	Catering manager or lead cook	Joins the 6-week Chef Educator cohort and in-person training days, and leads change in the kitchen.
Gardening Lead	Any staff member with an interest in growing	Joins the gardening webinars, looks after the garden through the growing season, and supports students in setting up their own market stall at school.
Student Advocacy Lead	Head of Year or PSHE teacher	Leads the Bite Back advocacy strand by facilitating a weekly student club and feeding back to SLT.
Curriculum Lead	Teacher or food education lead	Oversees food education activities and supports Jamie Oliver's 10 Skills programme.

YOU'LL ALSO COMPLETE A LIGHT-TOUCH BASELINE AND END-OF-YEAR ASSESSMENT.

HOW TO JOIN

1. **Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI):** Complete the short EOI form on the School Food Project Hub.
2. **Optional call:** Opportunity to chat through the programme with the School Food Project Engagement Team.
3. **Sign the participation agreement:** confirm your SLT champion and team roles ahead of cluster onboarding.

