



Will Quince MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/contactus/dfe

8 February 2022

Dear Jacquie,

Thank you for meeting me on 15th December 2020 and for updating me on the full range of issues facing the food sector. It is vitally important to get feedback from those directly involved in delivering services to children and I hope to have the opportunity to seek more views during 2022, including from catering staff in schools.

I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to LACA members for their efforts to keep school meal services operational.

School food has a high public profile, but I can understand that people in the industry may sometimes feel that their efforts have gone unnoticed and unsung. I can assure you that this is not the case. Kitchen and canteen managers, chefs and catering assistants; suppliers of food and equipment and those involved in logistics and payment, have all contributed towards the provision of good quality, nutritious meals for pupils in our schools. This is an essential contribution if children are to learn effectively.

What I have noticed, in particular, has been:

1. The flexibility and initiative to keep services going in the face of unpredictability in supply and deliveries; and, of course, the uncertainties in planning and resourcing resulting from Covid.
2. The vital commitment made to maintaining standards with the provision of appetising and nutritious meals.
3. The time and effort made by staff to apply labelling to Pre-Packed for Direct Sale foods in line with the new legal duties arising from Natasha's Law, especially in cases where ingredients may have changed.


I would be grateful if you could pass on my thanks and appreciation to LACA members and their employees.

For the future, we aim to continue to tackle Covid through our effective vaccination programme, and to continue to address supply chain challenges through supporting an expansion in the number of new HGV drivers, including via free training as part of the Government's Skills Bootcamps.

We will contribute strongly to the government's obesity strategy – reducing long term pressures on the NHS arising from avoidable health problems. We have an opportunity to contribute, starting with early prevention through the continued provision of healthy food for children in schools. Ensuring all schools are operating in line with the school food standards across the school day is paramount and I welcome your continued support in actively promoting this requirement with your members.

Please accept my thanks once again and my best wishes for 2022.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Quince', is centered within a light gray rectangular box. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Will Quince MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families