

Schools Need Funding to Improve School Meals, Says SHA

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The Secondary Heads Association has reservations about the government's announcement today on school meals. While the association supports efforts to improve children's diets, it is skeptical that the government is committed to providing the funding and flexibility schools need to be able to improve school dinners.

Says SHA General Secretary, Dr John Dunford:

We are pleased that the government is acknowledging the importance of diet in raising pupil achievement. I have always said that one good breakfast is worth a dozen school initiatives.

I agree with the government that more must be done to improve students' diet. However, to have any real impact, schools must be given extra funding and resources. With the many other pressures on budgets, schools do not have money available to transfer to school meals. Schools shouldn't be forced to choose between new computers or fresh vegetables.

Schools are not the whole solution to improving children's diet. The government must also put pressure on the food industry to advertise more responsibly and on parents to improve their children's diet at home. Unfortunately, in too many instances, parents are part of the problem rather than the solution. Until children have a better diet at home, schools will have no more than a marginal affect on improving nutrition.