



Introduction

This document describes the Kitchen Social Programme and should be used as a point of reference for people who wish to join.

Kitchen Social is a London programme convened by the Mayor's Fund for London. It has been designed to be transferrable to other locations, but for the purposes of this document, we are describing the London scenario.

The Challenge

500,000 London children struggle for food during the school holidays.

For children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the school holidays can be a difficult time. With no free school meals or teacher support, hunger and social isolation are a reality for many young Londoners.

Teachers report malnourished children returning to school after the holidays having fallen behind compared to their peers. Many young people will never claw back this learning and health disadvantage to fulfil their potential.

Food poverty results in isolation, counter to most people's expectations, and health services report that the BMI of poorer children increases dramatically in the school holidays. This is thought to be because these children engage in less activity and eat a poor diet.

Holiday hunger among children in a city as prosperous as London cannot be accepted.

How does Kitchen Social help?

Kitchen Social works with local grass root community organisations to create an environment where children, young people, their families and carers can feel comfortable to play, explore new ideas, make new friends, learn and get a good balanced **free** meal during the holidays.

The environment will be safe, and fun. It will not only ensure attendees receive a balance meal, but also offer young people the opportunity to get involved in the preparation of food and learn life skills linked to shopping and budgeting that will help them outside of the hub.

Young people will be encouraged to join in with physical and social activity which will maintain their level of fitness.

It is believed that the establishment of these spaces is a key step in reversing the three main growing trends seen over the last 30 years - holiday hunger, social isolation and children falling behind in their education.

The food provision **will be easy to access and free at the point of delivery.**

Who is Kitchen Social for?

Kitchen Social will appeal to a wide age range however some hubs may choose to focus on specific groups. Indeed, we anticipate that the majority of the service will be used by children aged under 16 years old but the programme overall will cater for young people up to the age of 18. Young people over the age of 18 will be encouraged to join as volunteers in exchange for the benefits of attending the hub.

How will Kitchen Social be delivered?

We believe that a long term sustainable solution is only achievable through partnership across the private, public and charitable sectors. Although we are presently working with individual hubs and will continue to do so, our aim is to create a steering group in each Local Authority which will represent key stakeholders across the voluntary, statutory and business sectors to ensure the roll out of Kitchen Social best fits the need of the local community.

This partnership will not only ensure we reach those most at risk, thereby increasing our intended impact, but also guarantee the delivery model is linked into the public health strategy, obesity strategy children's services and education.

During the early stages of this programme development we are and will continue to work with individual hubs with the intention of developing a steering group once a cluster of hubs are running in a borough.

Kitchen Social hubs will eventually become part of an online network. There are plans to develop a website linked to a phone app which will enable families and young people to find a site near them. We anticipate that this network will also enable local businesses to support hubs in the area.

Who is eligible to become a Kitchen Social Hub?

We work with a wide range of community based organisations from adventure playgrounds, youth centres, libraries, churches and faith groups, community and leisure centres to name just a few.

The following list outlines the criteria each hub must adhere to, which will ensure the hub not only reflects the ethos of Kitchen Social but also meets the required quality assurance:

- Be located in an area of high deprivation
- Run an open access centre (free for children and young people to attend) or be charging a minimal fee of up to £5 per day on condition that the charge does not increase to cover food provision
- Already be providing or have funds to provide a wide range of physical and educational activities during the holidays (minimum of one hour per day)
- Provide at least 20 days free food provision over the year for a minimum of 20 children and young people. 75% of meals must be hot cooked meals.
- Ensure the food provision adheres as closely as possible to food based standards (training will be given)
- Ensure a safe, fun, stigma-free environment, where everyone is treated with respect
- Agree that no child that asks for food will be turned away
- Have all statutory policies around child safety and safeguarding in place and operational
- Invite parents to participate and get involved
- Provide a family setting for their meals

In addition each hub will agree to:

- Attend our training on project management, cooking and volunteer management
- Complete and pass our Quality Assurance Mark
- Proactively market Kitchen Social holiday provision
- Proactively collect data for organisational, local and national evaluation
- Use relevant evaluation to make continuous improvements to their Kitchen Social hub and to share good practice

What is the Kitchen Social Quality Assurance Mark?

Once an organisation registers its interest in becoming a hub, the Kitchen Social team will support them to work towards the Kitchen Social quality assurance mark (QAM). The QAM will not only cover statutory factors that must be adhered to but will also list actions and elements of quality that a new organisation must be able to deliver before the mark is awarded. Only when the minimum criteria are met can the new organisation be acknowledged as a Kitchen Social hub.

What support does Kitchen Social Give to our Hubs?

To help hubs reach the right level of readiness and quality we will provide a support package which includes:

- **Holiday Provision Handbook and Training:** This covers the 10 main principles of running a holiday provision. Our handbook and training will take you through each step ensuring you get the right knowledge and skill sets to make running a holiday provision as easy and stress free as possible.
- **Cooking Handbook and Training:** We want to make sure that all our inspiring voluntary cooks have all the skills needed to turn a family meal for four into a family meal for 50. The cooking handbook and training will give you tips on how to manage a budget, explain what the school food standards are, how to batch cook, and will give you a selection of over 40 tried and tested recipes.
- **Volunteer Management Handbook:** Volunteers make up a third of the support at our hubs which indicates how important they are in delivering a successful Kitchen Social provision. It is therefore imperative to understand how best to support them while they volunteer with you. This handbook will help look at recruitment, motivation, progression and training of volunteers to ensure hubs have the right people with the right skills to run the hub successfully.
- **Funding:** Our hubs will get a fixed financial support package of which the majority needs to be spent on food, however it can also assist in ensuring the kitchen equipment needed is bought and staff and volunteers are given the necessary training.
- **Platforms:** To share good practice, identify new approaches and trends, signpost existing and new opportunities across London via website, newsletter and meetings.
- **Networking opportunities:** Our aim is to work across the private, public and charitable sector to build a solid infrastructure supporting holiday provision for the long term future.

- **Evaluation: Working with partners** we will be developing an evaluation framework that all Kitchen Social hubs will contribute towards. This data will not only be used to ensure hubs make continuous improvement and also make a case for change.

Kitchen Social's 2020 Vision

In the next three years to have:

- Established 330 Kitchen Social hubs
- Delivered 300, 000 meals
- Supported 50, 000 children and young people

Who is helping and advising Kitchen Social?

We believe Kitchen Social will undergo a process of continuous improvement as we learn from hubs delivering the programme. Having a comprehensive advisory group made up of our key stakeholders will ensure that Kitchen Social does its best to help children and young people at most risk of holiday hunger, social isolation and falling behind in their education.

Case for Change

Working with the Kitchen Social hubs and 50, 000 young Londoners, we will gather evidence to make a case that there should be a statutory responsibility resolving the impact of food poverty in the holiday periods as well as at term time.

Contact us

For more information or to register your interest in becoming a Kitchen Social hub please, contact Miguel Gonzalez on mgonzalez@mayorsfundforlondon.org.uk

Join the conversation - @mayorsfund #KitchenSocial