

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP  
Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP  
Minister of State for Schools

19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

Dear Minister,

### **National Food Strategy – Recommendations for Food Education**

*“It is time to take food education seriously”*

We write to you as proud members of the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Britain’s leading professional membership association of head chefs, head pastry chefs, restaurant managers and suppliers. Our mission is to promote food education and skills from primary through secondary school and lifelong work in the hospitality industry. Our programme of apprenticeships and awards helps to build the standards of culinary excellence which underpin careers in and the success of Britain’s world-leading hospitality sector. We also teach 17,000 children a year through our food education charity, the Adopt a School Trust.

Earlier this year we organised a round table of the leading food education providers to contribute to the National Food Strategy. This network provides the food education material used by schools across the country; it teaches or supports the teaching of food education in schools; it trains the teachers; and it builds children’s knowledge of food systems, farming and the countryside and sustainable food production.

Their work is almost entirely funded through non-profit fundraising, grants and donations; few get any money from government. Without this work, food education in schools would not happen.

We are proud to see that the core recommendations put forward by this network have been included in the National Food Strategy. It highlights that culinary skills and knowledge have declined across every social class since convenience food became widely available. And it calls for food education to be central to the national curriculum, as a key reform to help escape the ‘Junk Food Cycle’ to protect the NHS and support reforms to build a better food system for a healthier nation.

Food education is on the curriculum but there needs to be the training, budget and resources to allow teachers to deliver it well, and we fully support Recommendation 3, to launch a new Eat and Learn initiative for schools that would ensure that children start learning about food earlier, and that all food lessons are well funded and rigorously inspected by Ofsted; that the Food A-level should be brought back,



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The Adopt a School Trust forms part of the Education and Training Programme of the  
Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, whose Patron is His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. Charity No. 1087567

Chief Executive: Sara Jayne Stanes OBE, Executive Chef: Idris Caldora MCA, Programme Director: Helena Houghton, Programme & Events Coordinator: Juliet Snow  
North West Chef Lecturer: James Holden, South East Chef Lecturer: Ashley Marsh  
Trustees: David Coubrough (Chairman), Amanda Afiya, Myles Bremner, Richard Dunne, Frederick Mostert, Richard Shepherd CBE,  
Sara Jayne Stanes OBE, Brian J Turner CBE, John Williams MBE

to give students a clear route into the food industry; and support the NFS measures to improve the overall food culture in schools.

The National Food Strategy also says: “We must ensure that as many children as possible finish school with the knowledge and ability to cook healthy and nutritious food for themselves.” The Department for Education must become a cheerleader for more and better food education. We are writing to offer to work with your department to do this and help deliver the National Food Strategy’s recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

John Williams MBE, Executive Chef, **The Ritz** and Chairman, **The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts**

Brian Turner CBE, President, **The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts**

Rick Stein CBE, Chef Proprietor, **The Seafood Restaurant**

Heston Blumenthal, Chef Patron, **The Fat Duck**

Raymond Blanc OBE, Chef Patron, **Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons**

James Golding, Group Chef Director, **The Pig Hotels**

Sara Jayne Stanes OBE, Chief Executive, **The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and Adopt a School Trust**

Paul Heathcote MBE, Owner, **Heathcote & Co**

Cyrus Todiwala OBE DL, Chef Patron, **Café Spice Namasté**

Paul Askew, Chef Patron, **The Art School Restaurant**

Chris and Jeff Galvin, Chef Patrons, **Galvin Restaurants**

Jason Atherton, Chef Patron, **The Social Company**

Cc:

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP, Prime Minister

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care