



NURSERY NUTRITION AND FOOD PROVISION IN LIVERPOOL Final Report

Liverpool First For Health and Wellbeing Partnership
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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership has identified a need to offer support to early years settings across the city. To ensure this support meets the needs of nurseries and stakeholders it is important to gain a detailed picture of existing practice, knowledge and provision. Therefore Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership commissioned HM Partnerships (www.hmpartnerships.co.uk) to carry out an evaluation of current nursery nutrition to identify and maximise opportunities for promoting healthy food provision.

BACKGROUND

Research into the health and wellbeing of children shows that their daily diet raises major concerns about their current and future health. From an early age children develop patterns of healthy eating and therefore schools and nurseries offer a place where we can support children in the consumption of a healthy diet. Unlike schools however, there are no current minimum standards for food provision in nurseries. The School Food Trust therefore highlights the need for a 'more comprehensive, coherent food and nutrition guidance for nurseries that can be accessed easily and be appropriately delivered by all early years settings in England.'

AIMS OF THE REVIEW

- 1 To inform the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership of the current food provision across the early years setting in Liverpool.
- 2 Inform the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership of the current, knowledge, attitudes and skills of staff in early years settings.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To carry out a review of literature examining the evidence base for policies affecting early years nutrition
- 2 To understand and assess food policy, provision and current practices
- 4 To benchmark current provision against comparable local authority
- 5 To carry out a professional menu analysis of nursery menus, benchmarked against the Caroline Walker Trust guideline nutrient based standards for under 5s in childcare.

RESULTS

All 130 nurseries in Liverpool were invited to take part in the review, of which 49 (38%) became involved. The sample of respondents was broadly representative of total nurseries in terms of nursery type and location across the city.

The headline results include:

- Nearly ¼ of nurseries do not have a food policy in place
- Average spend per child per main meal is £1 - £2
- 57% of nurseries do not regularly assess their menus for nutritional quality
- 61% of caterers reported to having received only a 'little' advice on healthy eating and this was often not specific to under 5s nutrition
- Only 21% of respondents stated that they have adequate knowledge on nutrition of pre-school children
- 29% of nurseries offer cakes/biscuits on a daily basis
- No nurseries have fully compliant (with Caroline Walker Trust Guidelines) menus.

- All menus are deficient in: energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc.
- 85% of nurseries have sodium/salt levels which exceed guidelines.
- There are no significant differences between public and private sector nurseries
- There are no significant differences between Neighbourhood Management areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Whilst results are broadly comparable to similar local authority areas, the report demonstrates that all nurseries require support on healthy eating at a policy, knowledge and training level. The report suggests that this support should address concerns relating to both menu planning and ingredients used in food provision, bringing Liverpool nurseries up to a level which meets current guidelines for food provision for under 5s.

The main nutritional areas of concern in Liverpool nurseries are that in general they are serving lower than the recommended energy intake required for the U5's, they are serving excessive amounts of sodium/salt and they are serving lower than recommended levels of iron and zinc. In addition many nurseries in Liverpool are still serving high levels of processed foods and no nurseries are fully compliant with Caroline Walker Trust national guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following areas appear to have the greatest potential for improvement through additional support and should be discussed in detail by the wider partnership:

- Development of a standard healthy eating policy for all early years settings in Liverpool
- Development of a specific training package for pre-school caterers and nursery staff
- Development of specific nutritional guidance support for under 5's aimed at parents and nursery staff.
- Professional support for all early years settings in menu planning
- The partnership should also consider and discuss the potential for further intervention relating to policy on early years food provision within the city

1 INTRODUCTION

There have been several papers written over the past three years outlining current food provision in nursery settings. The findings from these reviews highlighted several areas of concern relating to the knowledge and training of those providing the food and indeed the nutritional quality of the food served. Through this work, Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership has identified a need to offer support to nursery settings across the city. In order to ensure the support is effective and meets the needs of nurseries it is important to gain a detailed picture of existing practice, knowledge and provision within nurseries.

In October 2009, Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership commissioned an evaluation of current nursery nutrition across the public and private early years settings, to identify and maximise opportunities for promoting healthy food provision.

The evaluation was delivered by HM Partnerships* and supported by Menu Matters.** In conducting this review, HM Partnerships analysed available literature on early years nutrition and explored the views and opinions of key stakeholders. The evaluation attempts to do three things:

- 1 Describe the current national position on early years nutrition
- 2 Conduct a qualitative review of early years settings to understand and assess food policy, provision and current practices
- 3 Carry out a professional menu analysis of nursery menus benchmarked against the Caroline Walker Trust guideline nutrient-based standards for under 5s in childcare

*HM Partnerships is a public health consultancy established as a Community Interest Company. As a social enterprise, profits are re-invested into the prevention of cardiovascular disease through the charity, Heart of Mersey, www.hmpartnerships.co.uk

**Menu Matters provide professional nutritional analysis of menus and advise changes to meet specific requirements. www.menumatters.co.uk

2 BACKGROUND

Research into the health and wellbeing of school children shows that their daily diet raises major health concerns in terms of an increase in obesity and other related conditions.¹

In the UK, in 2007, 17% of boys aged 2 to 15, and 16% of girls were classed as obese, an increase from 11% and 12% respectively in 1995.² If action is not taken, Government reports have predicted that by 2025 14% of young people under the age of 20 will be classified as obese.³ These soaring rates in obesity have led to an increase in childhood type II diabetes and will lead to increases in rates of heart disease, osteoarthritis and some cancers. In 2008, the Government Cabinet Office's Strategy Unit said that "existing patterns of food consumption will result in our society being loaded with a heavy burden of obesity and diet-related ill health"⁴ and that "ill health is already costing the NHS £10 billion per annum."⁵

Most children in the UK eat too much fat, particularly saturated fat, sugars and salt. According to the National Heart Forum children are eating 50% more saturated fat and sugar than the maximum recommended and double the recommended amount of salt.⁶ Other studies have shown that only around 8% of children meet the recommended consumption limits for saturated fat and only around 42% meet the recommendations for total fat.⁷ In addition, children on average eat only around two of the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.⁸ Within the lowest socio-economic groups consumption of fruit and vegetables is 50% lower than the highest social group.

On Merseyside children's poor diets are reflected in the local health trends. Over 1.2 million people in Greater Merseyside are eating too much saturated fat and are failing to meet the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables a day and more than 800,000 Merseyside residents are now overweight or obese. Between 1989 and 1998 the proportion of overweight and obese children under five years in Wirral increased from 20% to 33%,⁹ and in some parts of Merseyside nearly 60% of boys are overweight. In Liverpool it is estimated that 13,000 children were obese in 2008.

If the current trends continue 50% of all children will be overweight or obese by 2020 and this is occurring at a very early age.¹⁰ The problem is most acute for those who are born into low-income families, with inadequate income and inadequate access to healthy food making it much more difficult to improve the diet.¹¹

To help children develop patterns of healthy eating from an early age, it is important that the food and eating patterns to which they are exposed – both at home and outside the home are those which promote positive attitudes to good nutrition. However families may not always be able to provide an adequate diet for their child for many reasons; including financial circumstances, knowledge and beliefs and social and cultural factors.

Schools, pre-schools and nurseries therefore offer a place where we can support children in the consumption of healthy diet and in the briefing paper 'Interventions on Obesity' (2004) the Health Development Agency reported that 'Multi-faceted, school-based interventions can reduce obesity and overweight in schoolchildren.' The paper goes on to conclude that 'nutrition education and modification of school meals may prevent obesity.'¹²

To support the consumption of healthy balanced diets of school aged children the Department for Children Schools and Families sets statutory nutritional standards for school lunches, which give minimum requirements for the four main food groups (starchy foods; fruit and vegetables; milk and dairy foods; and meat, fish and alternative sources of protein). The standards go further to include a ban on the sale of confectionery and bagged savoury snacks other than nuts and seeds (without added salt or sugar). In addition, children must have easy access at all times to free, fresh drinking water in schools. The government provides funding for improving primary and secondary school meals and for the training of catering staff to support the new food and drink standards.¹³

Despite the recommendations of the School Meals Review Panel¹⁴ these statutory nutritional standards only cover local authority maintained primary, secondary and special schools and are not set for the early years settings.

L. Sharp, P. Mucavele and M. Nelson, Preliminary Review of Early Years Food, Nutrition and Healthy Eating Guidance in England: A Summary. School Food Trust. Eat Better Do Better. 2010

2.1 THE EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

The period before a child starts school is one of the most critical times in relation to their growth and development. It is essential that their food offers good quality nutrition since it provides the nutritional foundation required for the development of the physiological systems and it sets patterns of eating habits, good or bad, for life. Indeed the recent Audit Commission report (2010) states, "Evidence clearly demonstrates that improving early years' health contributes to better health outcomes in later life, with reduced levels of diabetes, CHD and hypertension, all of which have a significant impact on the NHS as well as wider society, children and their families".¹⁵

The total number of children going to nursery in England and Wales in 2006 was 618,300¹⁶ and the percentage of three and four year olds attending a nursery or early years childcare was ninety four percent in 2004.¹⁷ These figures are expected to rise. The National Day Nursery Association estimates that 73 per cent of the nurseries are in the private sector, 15 per cent are voluntary and 12 per cent are in the maintained (or state) sector.¹⁸ The childcare setting therefore provides an important opportunity to contribute to the child's diet through the provision of healthier foods. Indeed it could be argued that the nursery setting is of greater significance to a child's diet than that of the primary or secondary school, since a significant proportion of children who attend nurseries are there from 7am to 7pm and therefore receive the bulk of their food and nutrition from nursery.¹⁹ For these children, all daily food intakes may be provided entirely by the nursery on the days they attend.

Ofsted state that 'food provision in early years settings should provide nutritious food and drink to meet the child's needs'²⁰ but does not attempt to define the term 'nutritious', instead leaving it open to interpretation. Furthermore, Government commitment to setting nutritional standards for early years, similar to those set for schools, is not currently forthcoming.

In a preliminary review of current guidance for nurseries, undertaken by the School Food Trust (2009), it is reported that although there is a large amount of guidance being produced, no single source is viewed as authoritative. The School Food Trust therefore highlights the need for a 'more comprehensive, coherent food and nutrition guidance for nurseries that can be accessed easily and be appropriately delivered by all early years settings in England.'²¹

According to the Soil Association study (2008) the legal requirements offer no nutrient-based standards to guide nurseries on what they should be serving, no exclusions or restrictions from nurseries of less healthy products, such as crisps, processed meat products, biscuits or fried foods, no standards on portion size or fruit and vegetable intake and no regulation concerning snacks.²² Indeed, at present The Caroline Walker Trust (a registered charity that promotes better public health through good food) are widely regarded as the main 'authority' on nursery nutrition and they provide practical and nutritional guidelines to ensure that vulnerable population groups can eat well. The CWT published nutritional guidelines for children under the age of five in childcare settings in 2006, but their guidelines are not legally binding or enforceable.

In 2008 a small (487 nurseries) self selecting survey of nursery workers²³ across England and Wales showed wide variation in the types and quality of food provided to their children. Seventeen percent felt that children at their nursery were not given healthy food, with children from families on low incomes having less varied diets that are higher in sugar, saturated fat, salt and low in fibre, vitamins and minerals.²⁴ Only eight percent of nurseries responding to the survey ever served oil-rich fish and only twenty seven percent said they regularly served water to their children as a drink. Eight per cent described their food provision as "lots of processed food such as biscuits, burgers, etc, and sugary drinks like orange squash".

A survey of food provision in nurseries across Cheshire and Merseyside (Heart of Mersey June 2006), demonstrated that: Pre-school food policies on healthy eating are weak and closely reflect the ambiguity in the national guidance and that training on healthy eating by catering staff was not common or considered a priority in the pre-school sector. Only 20% of pre-school catering managers or head cooks had received training on healthy eating in the last 12 months and there was a general lack of awareness and/or action to reduce excess saturated fat intakes in pre-school children.²⁵

In a 2008 survey of parents eight percent reported that their children did not receive what they believed to be healthy food at nursery, fourteen percent reported that they were unsure about whether the food served was healthy and twenty one percent described the food at their children's nursery as 'poor' or 'mediocre'.²⁶

3 REVIEW OF NURSERY NUTRITION AND FOOD PROVISION IN LIVERPOOL

3.1 SCOPE OF REVIEW

Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership believe that there is considerable scope to examine current nursery and pre-school nutrition and to support the early years setting in the provision of healthy food across Liverpool early years settings. The context of this evaluation is to assess and review current pre-school nutrition across the public, private and voluntary early years settings. This evaluation will be used to inform the development of a pilot programme aimed at improving nutrition in early years and to enhance the training opportunities available in this area.

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF REVIEW

This report focuses on early years provision across the city of Liverpool, using the Caroline Walker Trust guidelines as a baseline to measure food provision. It should be acknowledged that a review of this type and complexity could take significant time and require significant financial investment to ensure a high percentage of nurseries fully comply. However this level of investment is not available for this review.

Therefore the review has been conducted to the most appropriate level of detail according to the available resources. For example a target response rate was set at 33% of early years centres and we acknowledge that the level of recipe and menu detail provided for Saffron analysis would not be complete in all circumstances.

Due to the voluntary nature of this review and the limited response rate we should be clear that there will be an inevitable 'self selection' bias in the data reported. Because HM Partnerships has no control over who responds to the questionnaire, or who submits their recipes and menus, respondents may in fact be a subset of the early years settings, one which has a stronger interest in its results. Additionally, the results are, to a significant extent, reliant on the honesty of the respondent. The results must therefore be considered with caution.

3.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aims of this study are:

- 1 To inform the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership of the current food provision across the early years setting in Liverpool.
- 2 Inform the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership of the current knowledge, attitudes and skills of staff in early years settings.

The main objectives for the study are:

- 1 To carry out a review of literature examining the evidence base for policies affecting early years nutrition
- 2 To conduct a qualitative review of early years settings to understand and assess food policy, provision and current practices using a specifically constructed questionnaire
- 3 To benchmark current provision against comparable local authority areas
- 4 To carry out a professional menu analysis of nursery menus (3 week cycle for each nursery). The benchmark for this analysis will be the Caroline Walker Trust guideline nutrient-based standards for under 5s in childcare
- 5 To make recommendations to the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board based on the reviews findings, including recommendations for further work
- 6 To produce a final comprehensive report detailing all above actions.

3.4 METHODOLOGY

3.4.1 Literature Review

Conduct a general literature search of published reports, journal articles, websites and further publications to identify evidence based research and other related publications in this area.

3.4.2 Qualitative Review

The use of qualitative approaches was taken to understand and assess food policy, provision and current practices using a specifically constructed questionnaire, designed to create a strong indication of nursery knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to nutrition.

The questionnaire was distributed with an introductory letter by post, electronically and through semi-structured interviews (telephone and face to face), to all 130 Liverpool nurseries and pre-schools identified by the partnership. All nurseries and pre-schools were sent a reminder to complete the questionnaire two weeks following the initial distribution.

In addition the research team aimed to conduct:

- 30-40 telephone surveys
- 10 face to face interviews

The review targets a minimum return rate of 33% (N.42) using the above methods.

3.4.3 Benchmarking

The review will seek to benchmark current food provision against a similar local authority. Benchmarking will address the question; how does pre-school provision delivered in Liverpool compare to a similar location in terms of nutritional quality, policy, knowledge and attitude?

3.4.4 Menu Analysis

This includes a full professional menu analysis (3 week cycle for each nursery) by an independent sub-contractor Menu Matters. Menus are analysed using dedicated software from Saffron Nutrition, a division of Fretwell-Downing Hospitality. Saffron Nutrition is the UK's leading nutritional analysis solution, and is supplied to Local Authorities responsible for primary and secondary school catering.

The benchmark for this analysis will be the Caroline Walker Trust (CWT) guideline nutrient-based standards for under 5s in childcare.

CWT Guidelines specify the levels of 12 different nutrients that children should get from their nursery food. This process requires a detailed level of information in order to provide a comprehensive analysis which accurately reflects the current nutritional status of nursery menus offered.

The following process was undertaken by Menu Matters:

- Analysis of each recipe to establish its nutritional content.
- Where no recipes or only part recipes were provided an analysis of a menu cycle was carried out using the most appropriate recipes drawn from many sources including the Menu Matters database, the Caroline Walker Trust (CWT) training materials and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Food Portion sizes book
- Where an ingredient description was ambiguous, the supplier's website was used to obtain ingredient weights and nutritional information
- Build recipes into menu plans and analysed against the CWT nutrient based standards.
- Split full menu data into component meals and analysed separately:
 - A snacks plan
 - A lunch plan
 - A tea plan.
- Compiled reports based on an analysis by Neighbourhood Management Area, nursery type and nutrient.

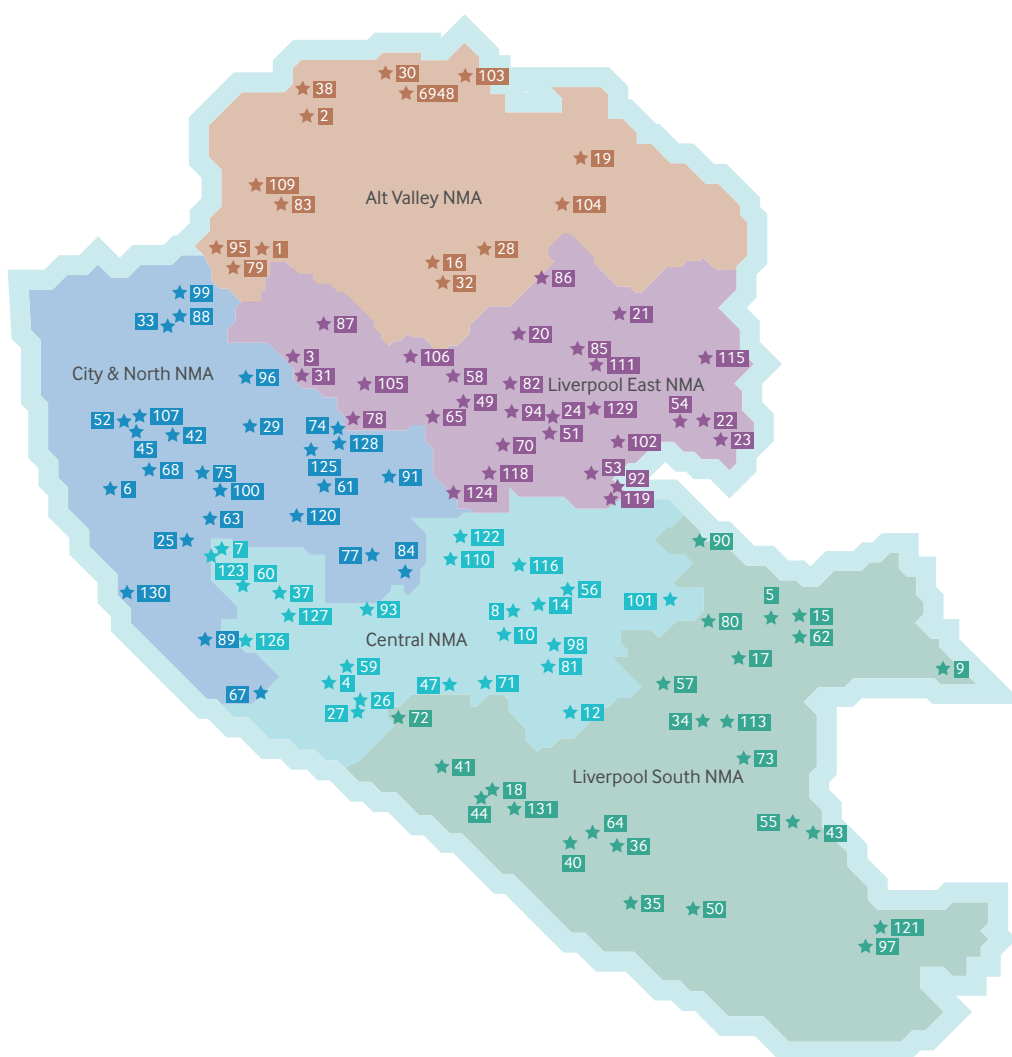
4 RESULTS

4.1 PRE-SCHOOL AND NURSERY DATABASE

It was originally reported that there were 138 pre-school and nursery care providers in Liverpool. In the scoping phase of this evaluation a breakdown of pre-schools and nurseries indicated that the actual number as of October 2009 was 130.

A full database of pre-schools and nurseries at October 2009 has been produced and is attached in Appendix 1.

Figure 1: Location of early years provision in Liverpool



<p>PRESCHOOLS IN LIVERPOOL BY NEIGHBOURHOOD AREAS</p>		Date: 06/10/2009
		Scale: 1:75,000
<p>Liverpool NHS Primary Care Trust ArtHouse, Seel Street, Liverpool L1 4AZ</p>		Status: DRAFT
		<p>Liverpool NHS PCT 1000 199 18 (2003) OS 100045043 (2006)</p>
<p>This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringe Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.</p>		
<p>Liverpool NHS PCT</p>		

4.2 QUALITATIVE REVIEW

A detailed electronic questionnaire was designed to enable the qualitative evaluation of early years food provision and knowledge. The questionnaire was developed from analysis of existing questionnaires including the 'Survey of Food Provision in Nurseries in Cheshire and Merseyside' (2006) to allow comparison of data with other studies and through detailed consultation with the expert reference panel.

The final questionnaire (Appendix 2) was posted out with a supporting letter to all early years settings identified on the data base. This original letter was followed up with a subsequent reminder letter to all 130 nurseries – posted out two weeks later.

Following distribution of the questionnaire, nurseries received telephone contact to offer telephone or face to face support in completing and returning the questionnaire and the required supporting information. In total 120 telephone calls were made to Early Years settings.

The subsequent number of face to face and telephone interviews conducted through this process totalled 86 from a target of 50. From this 71 semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted and 15 semi-structured, face to face interviews carried out.

A more detailed analysis of questionnaire data can be found in the report in Appendix 3.

4.3 MENU ANALYSIS

To provide a professional nutritional analysis of nursery menus, nurseries were supported in submitting full 3 week menus and recipes for analysis. Menus / recipes were analysed using a standardised computer package (Saffron) to investigate whether the food provided by nurseries in Liverpool meets current dietary and nutritional recommendations. The Caroline Walker Trust guidelines were used as a baseline to measure food provision.

783 recipes were analysed and inputted into Saffron. 102 menu plans were compiled and analysed against the relevant Caroline Walker Trust nutrient-based standards (20 full, 34 lunch, 21 tea, 27 snack)

Table 1: Level of information supplied for Saffron Analysis

Information supplied	Full cycle*	Lunch only	Tea only	
Full recipes & menu cycles	2	1		Best case
Part recipes & menu cycles	9	6		
Menu only (no recipes)	9	6	1	Worst case
TOTAL	20	13	1	34

* Full Cycle = all the food provided during the course of the day at nursery, i.e. lunch, tea and snacks.

The Caroline Walker Trust guidelines stipulate that children in full day care should receive:

- A A morning snack
- B Lunch (with dessert)
- C An afternoon snack
- D Tea (with dessert)

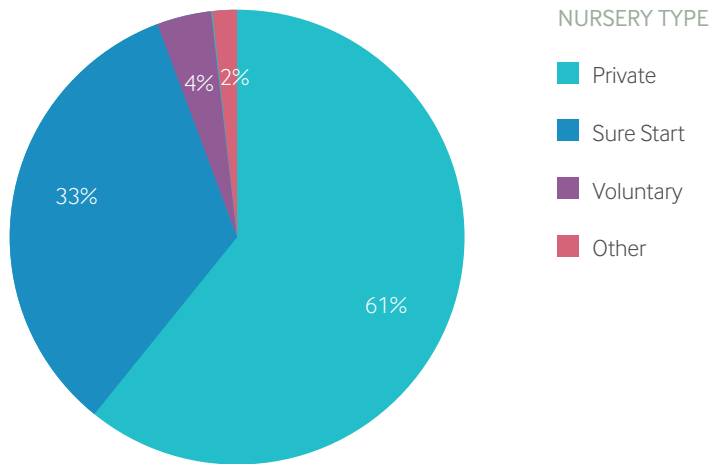
Only 35% of nurseries who responded to menu analysis provided full cycles.

- 35% provided (a) (b) (c) and (d) above,
- 55% provided (a) (b) and (d) – no afternoon snack,
- 10% provided only (b) and (d) – no snacks.

4.4 RESPONSE RATE BY NURSERY TYPE

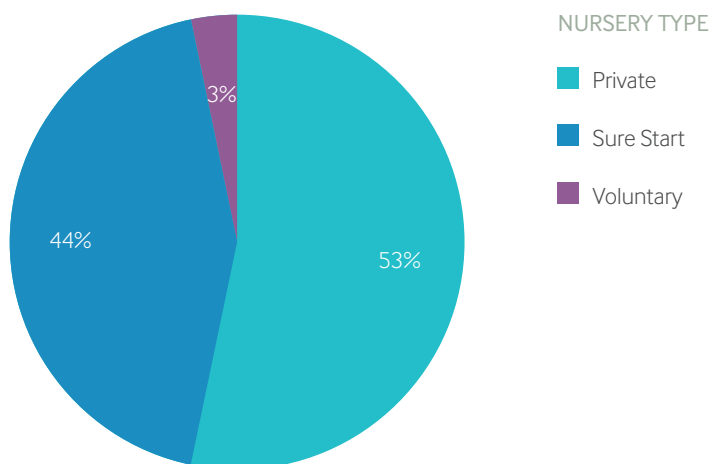
Questionnaires were returned from 49 nurseries. This represents a return rate of 38%, 4% higher than the target. 61% of responses came from private providers, 33% from Sure Start (public sector), 4% voluntary and 2% from other providers, in this case a hospital nursery.

Figure 2: Questionnaire response by nursery type



34 nurseries returned a menu (part menu) for analysis. This represents a 26% response rate. As with the questionnaire, response rates were highest from the private sector (53%) with 44% from Sure Start and 3% from the voluntary sector.

Figure 3: Menu analysis response by nursery type



4.4.1 Response rate by neighbourhood area

The report also looked to compare provision by neighbourhood management area to ensure a breadth of responses across Liverpool. The largest questionnaire response rate came from the Liverpool South area (33%) and the lowest in the Alt Valley area (10%).

Table 2: Questionnaire response rate by neighbourhood area compared to percentage of city nurseries in each area

Area	Percent of total number of Liverpool nurseries	Percent of total respondents from each area
Liverpool East	23	16
City and North	22	22
Liverpool South	19	33
Central	19	16
Alt Valley	17	10

In relation to menu returns the highest return came from City and North area (32%) with the lowest return coming from Alt Valley and Central areas (15%)

Table 3: Menu Analysis response rate by neighbourhood area compared to percentage of city nurseries in each area

Area	Percent of total number of Liverpool nurseries	Percent of total respondents from each area
Liverpool East	23	17
City and North	22	32
Liverpool South	19	20
Central	19	15
Alt Valley	17	15

4.5 EARLY YEARS FOOD POLICY

Of the 49 nurseries responding to the questionnaire, 77% reported that they had a food policy and 23% did not have a policy. In a similar study conducted by Sefton Council Environmental Protection Department 2007²⁷ they found that out of a similar sample, 82% had a food policy.

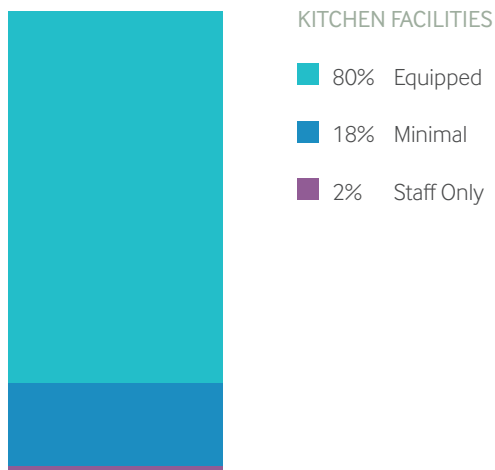
Whilst there is no statutory requirement on early years settings to have a policy on food, best practice and guidance would support the expectation that all early years settings have a policy that supports the provision of nutritious food and drink.

Resource allocation for this evaluation did not allow for detailed analysis of existing food policy. However of those stating they had a policy, only 29% (11) submitted this policy for the review.

4.5.1 Early Years Catering Facilities

Eighty percent of nurseries reported to having fully equipped kitchens, suitable for preparing and producing meals. A further eighteen percent had minimal facilities only suitable for reheating meals or preparing snacks.

Figure 4: Catering facilities



Twenty percent of nurseries had a specific dining room facility for the consumption of food, whilst 69% served food in the main nursery room. This is not reflective of the Cheshire and Merseyside study of 29 pre-schools that reported 31% had dedicated dining areas.

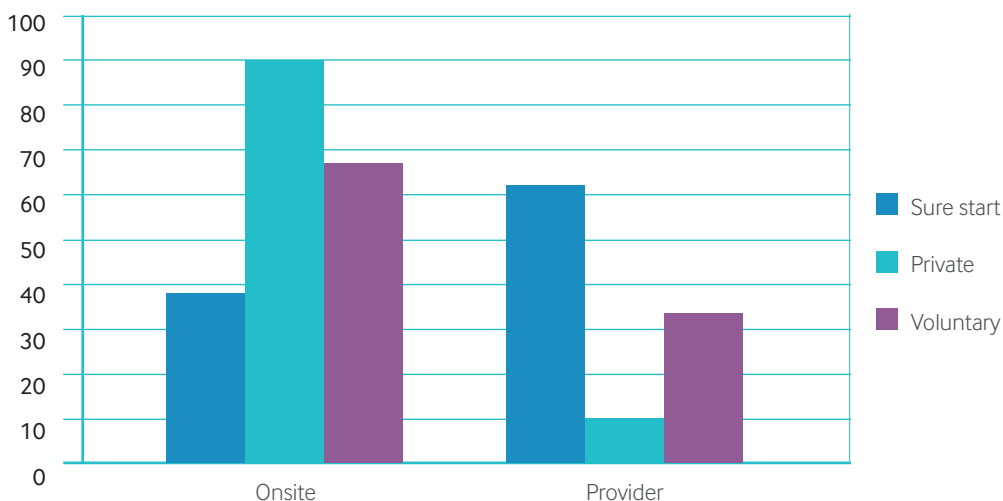
Table 4: Location where the main meals are served

Location where meals are served	Total (%)	Sure Start (number)	Private (number)
Dining room	20	3	6
Main nursery room	69	12	20
Individual Classroom	10	1	4

4.6 FOOD PROVISION

When considering food provision 70% of early years settings prepare food on site with the remaining 30% using an external food provider. There are significant differences between public and private providers however, with only 37.5% of public providers preparing their own food compared to 90% in the private sector.

Figure 5: Food provision in Liverpool nurseries

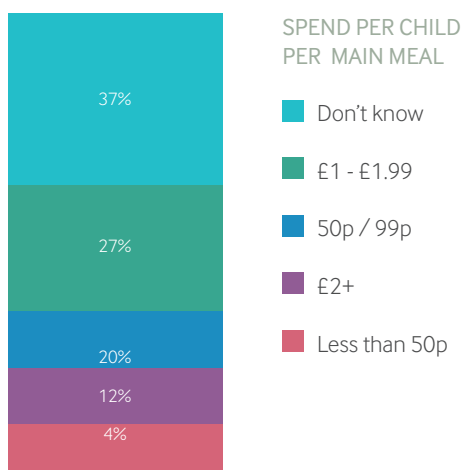


4.6.1 Spend per child per main meal

The questionnaire asked nurseries to consider the amount spent per child per main meal ('spend' is the cost of ingredients, and not costs plus overhead, or cost charged by second provider i.e. schools). Four percent of nurseries reported spending less than 50p per child per main meal. This is significantly lower than the Sefton study (41%) however 37% of respondents did not know how much they spent on food per child per main meal. A further 20% spent between 50p – 99p, with average spend per child per main meal being between £1- £2 (27%).

If we compare this data to that found in the Sefton study, they found that 38% spent between £1 - £2 on food for each child daily. The Sefton study reported average spend per child per main meal being 60p per day.

Figure 6: Spend per child per main meal



4.7 CATERING RESPONSIBILITIES, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

To allow the review to better understand existing levels of training it also considered who had responsibility for menu planning in the early years setting. For one in three (33%) nurseries this was the sole responsibility of the nursery manager compared to 35% of nurseries devolving this responsibility to the catering manager / cook. A further % reported joint (cook and manager) responsibility. The review then considered the training and qualifications of those with responsibility for menu planning and those with responsibility for catering.

4.8 MENU PLANNING

Approximately 43% of nurseries reported that their menus are always assessed for nutritional content. Sixteen percent of this assessment is carried out by the nursery manager / cook only (i.e. self assessment). Only 2 nurseries reported having their menus assessed by a nutritionist. Thirty seven percent reported that they are never assessed. In comparison, the Cheshire and Merseyside study 37% reported having received external support or advice when menu planning, generally the support came from the PCT, or environmental health.

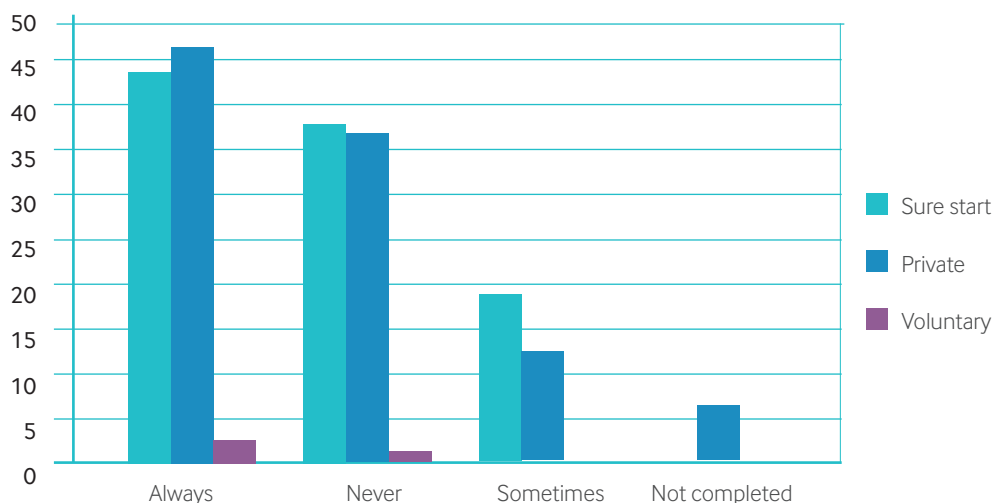
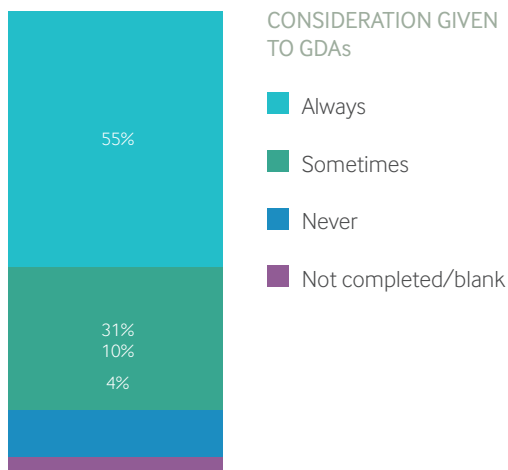


Figure 7: Assessment of menus for nutritional content

Nurseries were asked if consideration was given to dietary reference values / recommended daily intakes for this age group when designing menus. Just over half (55%) always considered these values and 4% never considered them.

Figure 8: Consideration given to guideline daily amounts



Eight percent of those responsible for menu planning did not state any catering or nutrition qualifications, 43% stated only food hygiene as their main qualification and this mirrors the findings from the Sefton review. However in the Sefton Review it was reported 57% of those with responsibility for menu planning had some nutrition training. This compared favourably to our Liverpool data which showed only 14% of those responsible for menu planning had nutrition specific qualifications. When just looking at catering managers, this figure rose to 41%. The specific nutrition training courses were not listed, or if the training was specific for under 5s.

4.9 CATERING QUALIFICATIONS

When asked what qualifications staff in charge of food provision have only 61% reported to having Basic Food Hygiene, which we should assume is inaccurate as all food providers would be legally expected to have this qualification as a minimum, but it does not encompass nutrition as part of its syllabus. A further 12% had City and Guilds 7061 and 7062 (catering qualifications) and 12% reported a catering specific qualification. It is important to note that some had listed more than one qualification and some had clearly prioritised food hygiene as their main qualification, whether or not this was the case is difficult to gauge, but does demonstrate that nutrition/ food specific qualifications were either minimal or were not perceived as relevant.

The questionnaire did not ask directly about specific training in healthy eating, however it did ask if they had received any specific advice about healthy eating and if they are aware of any nutritional guidelines to take into account when menu planning. Fourteen percent of respondents had received no specific healthy eating advice and a further 61% had only ever received 'a little' advice. For those who reported that they had received advice they did not state the source.

These responses are reflected in the answers to their awareness of nutritional guidelines for this age group. Forty one percent reported that they are not aware of any nutritional guidelines and 59% reported that they were. Of these 38% did not state the guidance (despite being asked). Of those that stated guidance, the majority (33%) stated Food Standards Agency Guidance whilst others listed; School Food Trust, NICE guidelines (Maternal and child nutrition), You Are What You Eat, Early years foundation stage, 5 a day guide and Pre-school learning alliance. Only 1 nursery listed Healthy Eating for Under 5s (CWT Guidance).

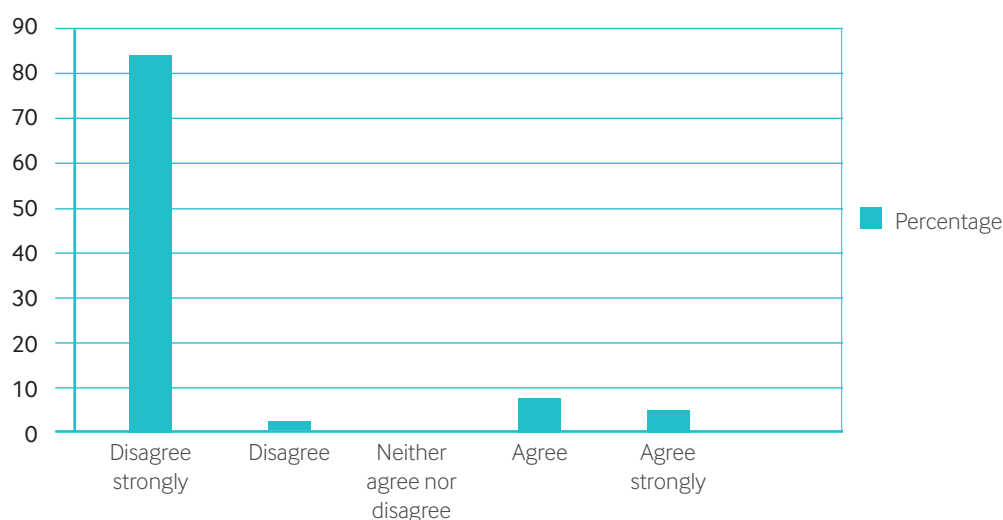
4.9.1 Knowledge

The survey considered a range of questions looking at the knowledge of catering managers, cooks and nursery managers relating to nutritional requirements for this age group. Generally the questions were laid out in a format that included a statement and answers were represented on a sliding numerical scale of 1- 5 (agree strongly, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and lastly disagree strongly). The following section outlines the responses to key questions.

Food eaten in nurseries is less important than that eaten outside?

In total 86% disagreed with this statement, they therefore believe that food eaten in nurseries is as important or more important than that consumed in the home or out of the pre-school environment. This is positive, however of significant concern are the 8% who feel food eaten in nurseries is not as important as that eaten outside.

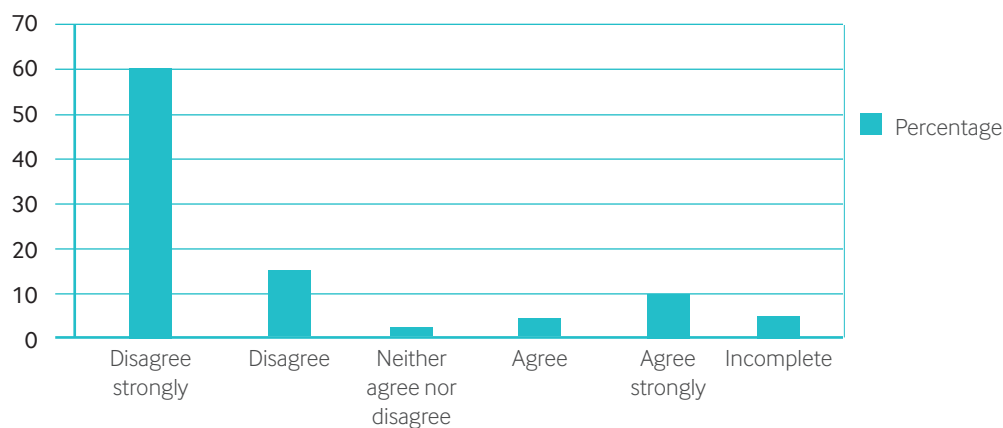
Figure 9



Dietary habits have little impact on health of pre school children

Fourteen percent of respondents agreed that dietary habits have little impact on the health of pre-school children. Seventy seven percent disagreed with this statement

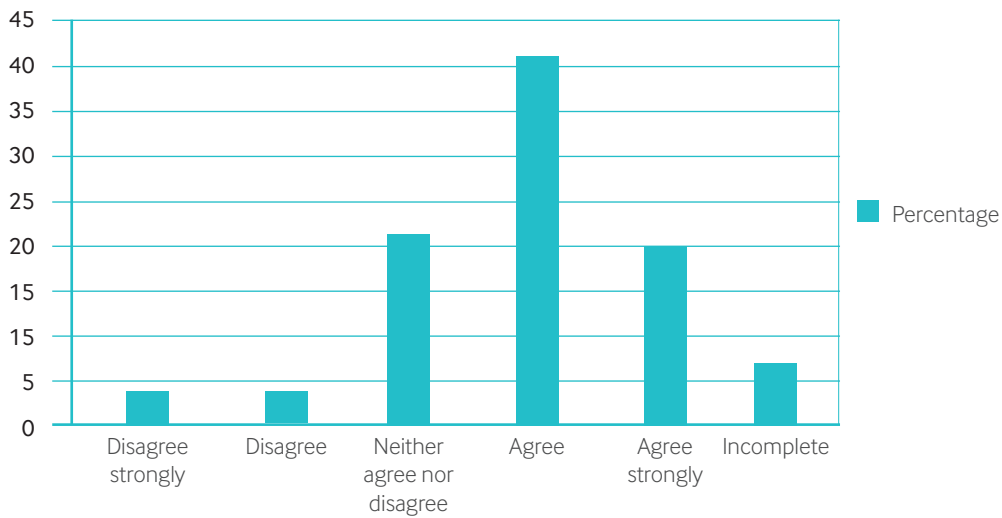
Figure 10



Is your knowledge on nutrition of pre school children adequate?

Sixty one percent of participating nurseries thought that their knowledge of nutrition for pre school children was adequate. Of the nurseries that cook their food on site, 27% stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement relating to their knowledge of nutrition in pre-school children, 6% percent stated that they did not feel they had the adequate knowledge and only 21% stated that they strongly agreed that they had adequate knowledge in this area.

Figure 11



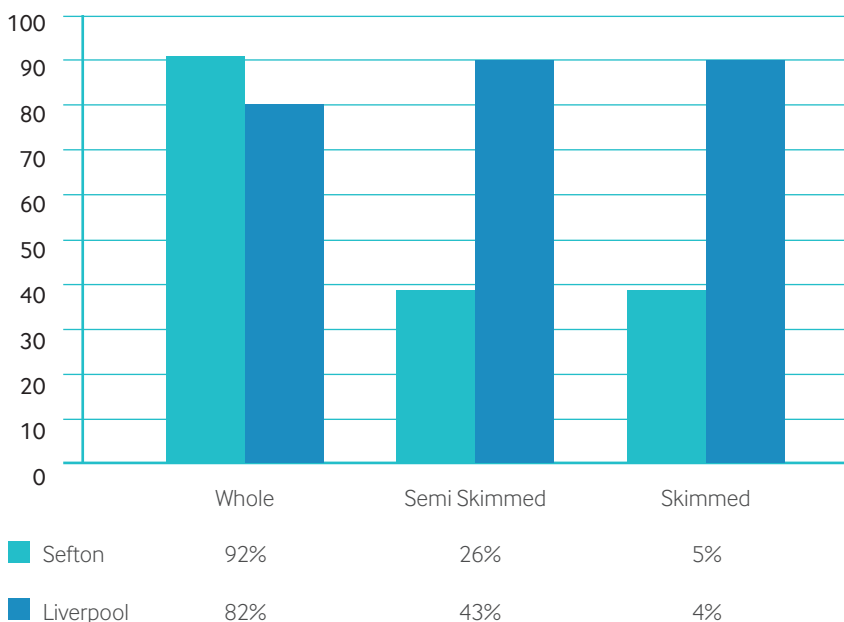
5 FOOD PROVISION

5.1 DRINKS

The Caroline Walker Trust (2006) states that children up to the age of two should be given whole milk as standard and that semi skimmed milk can be introduced after this age, as long as children are good eaters with a varied diet, since semi skimmed milk contains fewer calories and vitamins.

This study shows that whole milk was served by 82% of nurseries, with 43% offering semi skimmed milk to the older children. One nursery offered skimmed milk which goes against all professional guidelines. These results are comparable to the Sefton data with a slightly lower percentage of Liverpool nurseries serving whole milk and a higher percentage serving semi skimmed milk.

Figure 12 SEFTON AND LIVERPOOL MILK PROVISION IN PARTICIPATING NURSERIES



Ninety six percent of Liverpool nurseries offer tap water constantly during the day. Twenty two percent offered diluted fruit juice to their children, 4% diluted squash and 4% diluted sugar free squash (generally at meal and snack times).

5.2 FATS

Table 5: Type of oil used in cooking

Type of oil	Number of nurseries
Olive Oil	6
Sunflower Oil	4
Vegetable Oil	12
Stork / Lurpack	2
Incomplete	24

Table 6: Spread used in cooking and for general use

Brand of spread	Percent
Flora	24
Asda own brand	18
Utterly butterly	8
Tesco soft spread	6
Vitalite	4
Incomplete	24

Between a quarter and half of nurseries (depending on the question) did not report or state the name of any fat they use in cooking or as a spread. It is unlikely that they do not use anything and therefore the explanation maybe that they switch brands / types depending on cost or they may simply not know the name of the product used in the kitchen.

5.3 OILY FISH

Oily fish provision is significantly lower than guidelines. Nearly 40% of nurseries supply oily fish less than once a week, 20% reported that they supply it between once and twice a week.

5.4 PROCESSED MEAT

Two nurseries reported that they serve processed meats five or more times a week. All others stated that they served processed meat no more than between once and twice a week, with pies, pastries and pasties only available in most cases less than once a week.

5.5 SNACKS

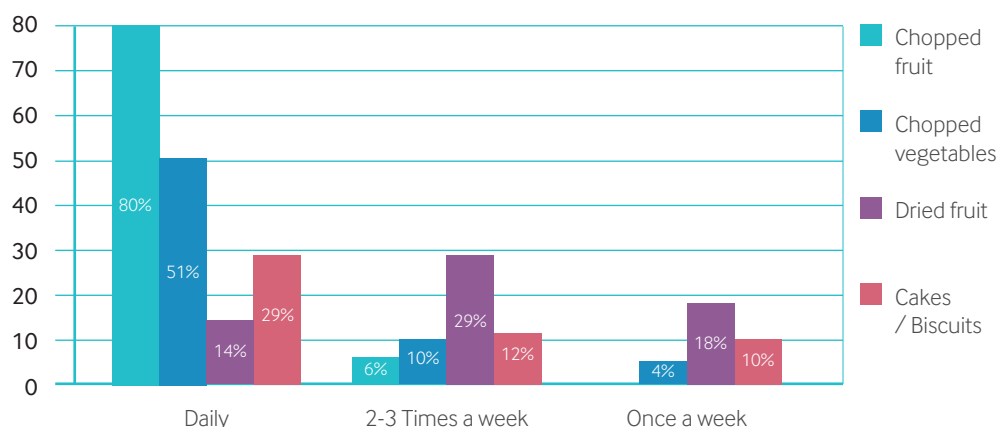
Eighty six percent of nurseries provided chopped fruit daily to the children in their care. Sixty five percent provided chopped vegetables as a snack,

Other snacks listed by nurseries included cakes and biscuits, toast, yoghurts, crisps, nuts, cereal bars and sandwiches.

Table 7: Percentage of Nurseries serving Fruit, Vegetables, Cakes and biscuits as Snacks

	Chopped fruit	Chopped vegetables	Dried fruit	Cakes /biscuits
Daily	80	51	14	29
2-3 times a week	6	10	29	12
Once a week	0	4	18	10

Figure 13 COMPARISON OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES AND CAKES/BISCUITS SERVED AS SNACKS



6 MENU ANALYSIS

The Menu Analysis report (Appendix 4) examines in detail the data gathered from 34 nurseries. The data has been analysed from four perspectives:

- Analysis of full menus and meal types.
- Analysis by neighbourhood management area (NMA).
- Analysis by nursery type (Private, Sure Start, Voluntary).
- Analysis by nutrient.

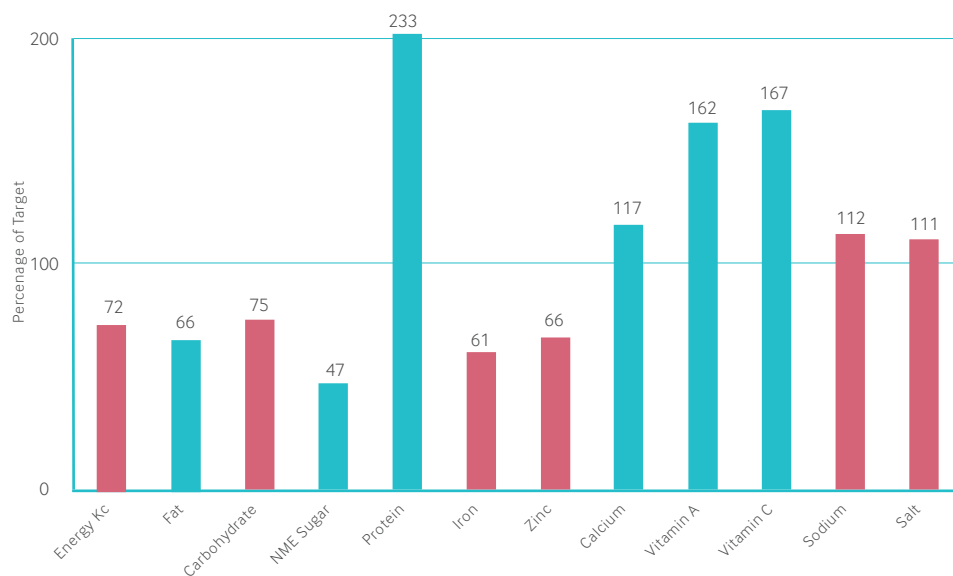
Details of this analysis are presented graphically in the full report however the results are summarised and headline data pulled out in the sections that follow.

6.1 FULL DAY CARE

Twenty (20) nurseries provided full menu cycles (i.e. lunch, snacks and tea). On average, full day care menu cycles are deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc and have excess sodium/salt levels.

The graph below summarises the compliance of the 20 responding nurseries to the Caroline Walker Trust nutrient-based standards for full-day care.

Figure 14 FULL MENU CYCLES - FULL MENU ANALYSIS



Note: A BLUE bar shows that the level of that nutrient in the menu hits the target. A RED bar shows a "miss", i.e. does not reach a minimum target, or exceeds a maximum level

There is a significant variance between the most and least compliant nurseries within the sample. Results range from very good compliance (4.5% variance to target), where minor adjustments will give balanced menus, to poor compliance (33% variance to target), where a complete restructure of recipes and menu cycles is needed.

Figure 15 FULL MENU CYCLES - MOST COMPLIANT NURSERY

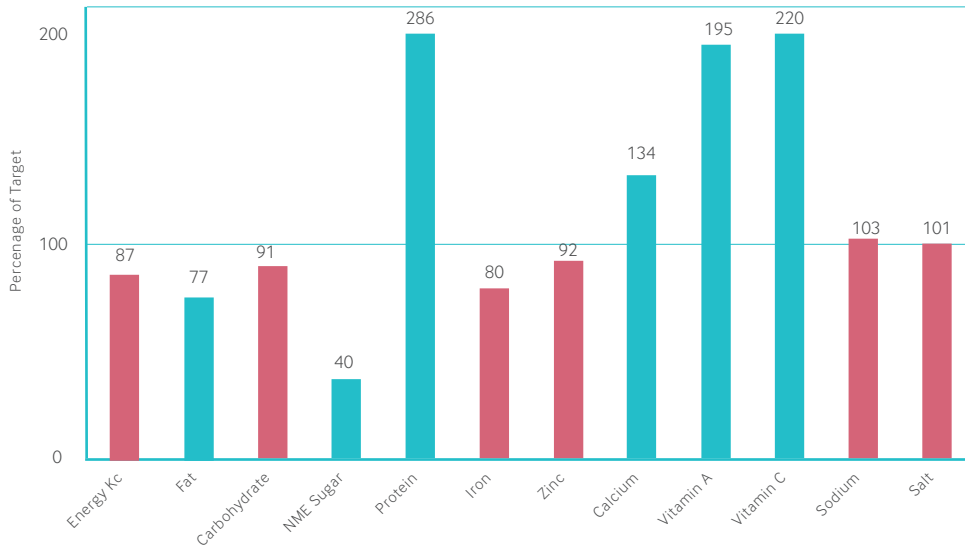
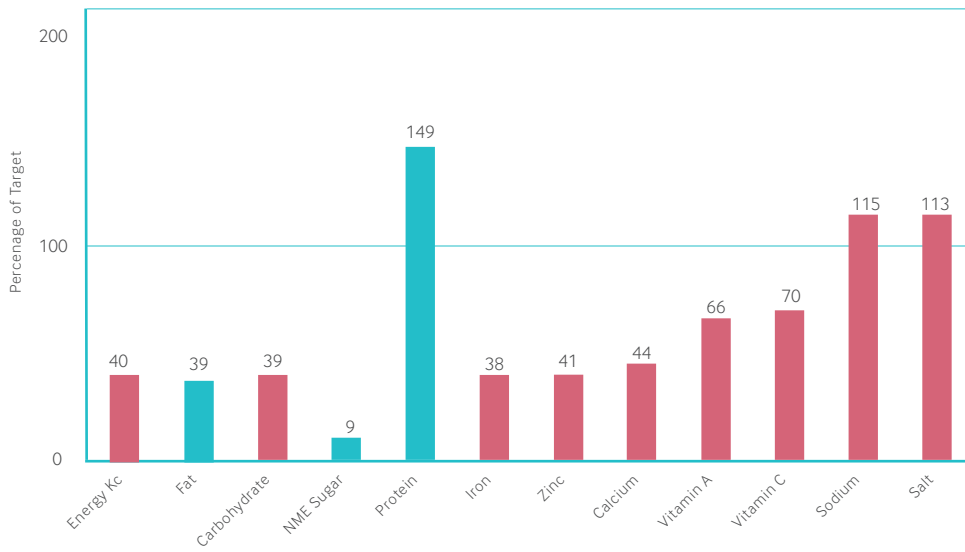


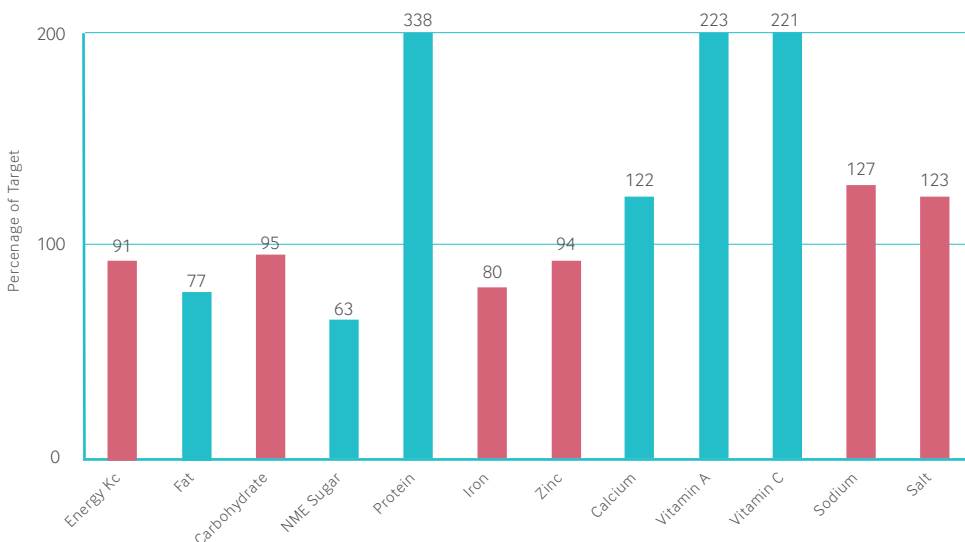
Figure 16 FULL MENU CYCLES - LEAST COMPLIANT NURSERY



6.2 LUNCH ONLY

Whilst lunches are the most compliant meal to the nutrient-based standards within the menu cycle, on average, lunch menus are deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc and have excess sodium/salt levels. The graph below summarises compliance to the nutrient requirements for lunch.

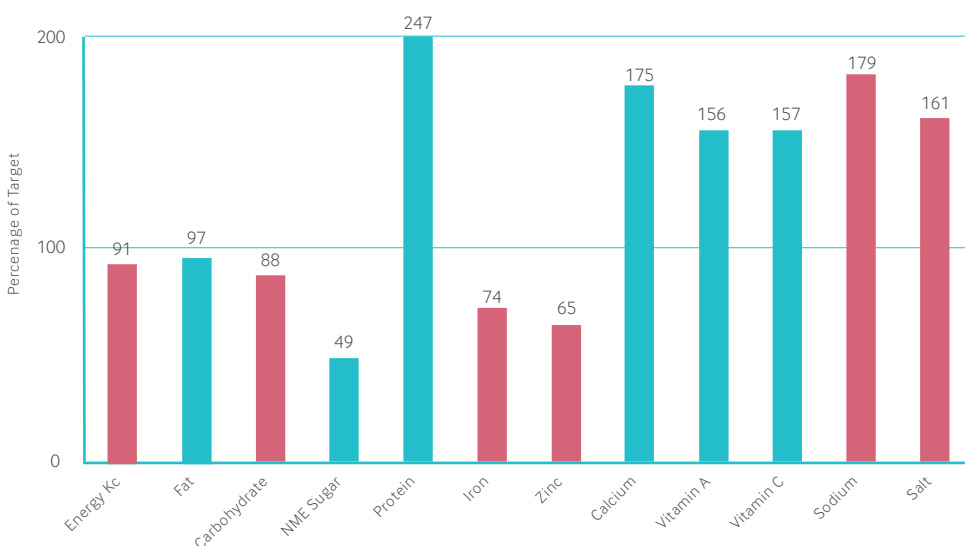
Figure 17 AVERAGE LUNCH ANALYSIS



6.3 TEA ONLY

The graph below summarises compliance to the nutrient requirements for Tea only. On average, tea menus are deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc and have very high sodium/salt levels which significantly exceed target.

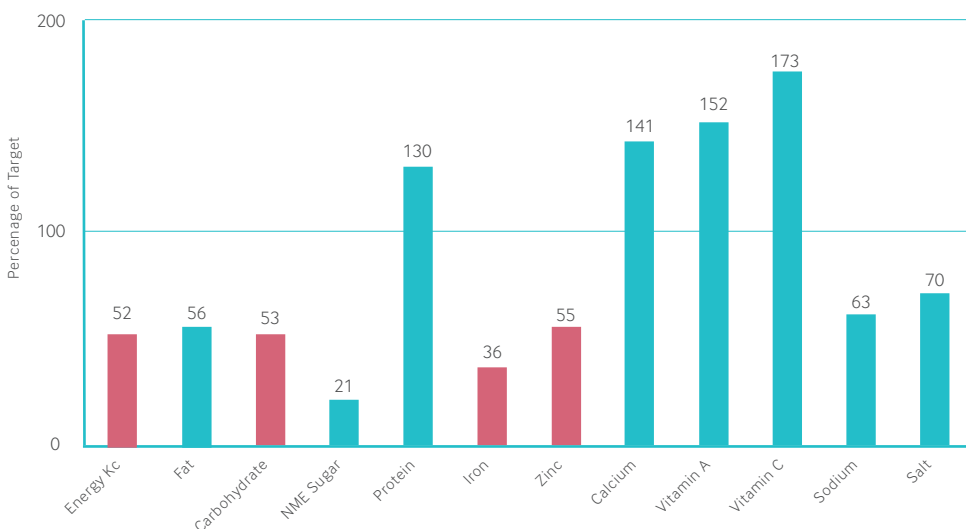
Figure 18 FULL MENU CYCLES - TEA MENU ANALYSIS



6.4 SNACKS ONLY

The graph below summarises compliance to the nutrient requirements for snacks. On average, snack menus are significantly deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc.

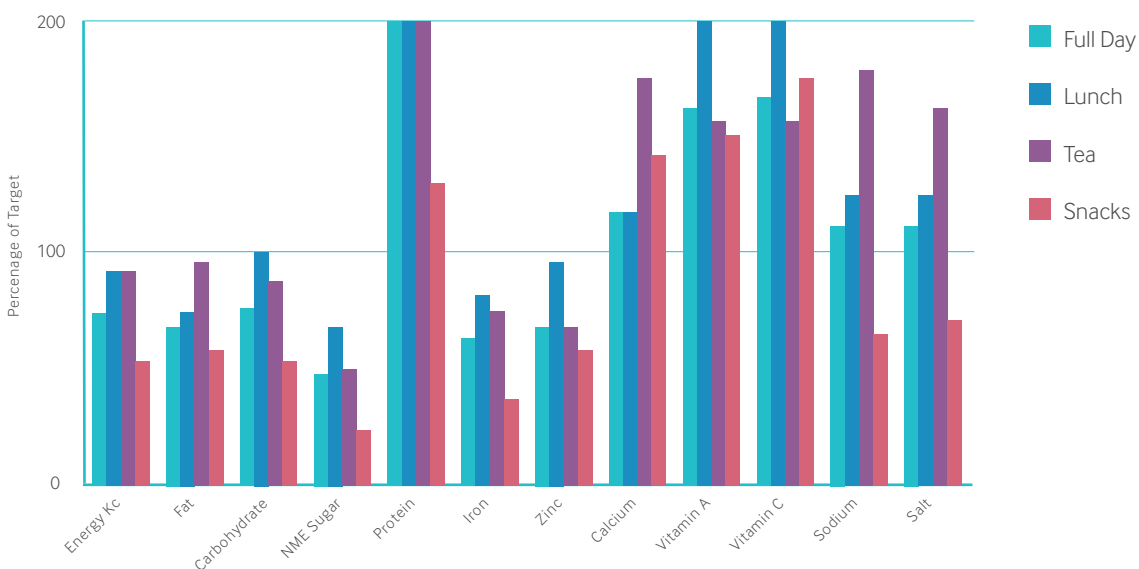
Figure 19 FULL MENU CYCLE - SNACK ANALYSIS



6.5 SUMMARY

- No nurseries within the sample comply fully to the CWT nutrient-based guidelines set for any of the meals or the full cycle.
- All cycles are deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc.
- Full menus, lunches and teas all contain too much sodium/salt.
- Snacks are most deficient in energy, carbohydrate, iron and zinc.
- Teas have the highest excess of salt.

Figure 20 SUMMARY OF FULL LUNCH, TEA & SNACKS ANALYSES



6.6 ANALYSIS BY NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT AREA

Further comparative analysis was carried out to determine whether there are any particular trends in nursery food provided in different Neighbourhood Management Areas (NMAs) in Liverpool. When analysing by NMA lunches have been chosen as the common denominator in order to include data from all nurseries.

It is important to note that lunches are closer to meeting the nutrient-based standards than full day menus, so comparisons are being made in the "best light".

The nutrients showing non-compliance are energy, carbohydrate, iron, zinc and sodium/salt. All others are compliant.

- Every NMA is too low for energy and iron.
- Every NMA is too high for sodium/salt.
- Carbohydrate and zinc levels are compliant for South Central.
- Zinc levels are compliant for Alt Valley.

Conclusions from the analysis by neighbourhood area showed that it is the individual nursery, not its geographic/demographic location, which determines the nutritional quality of the food it provides. There are examples of good and poor compliance within each geographical/demographical location.

6.7 ANALYSIS BY NURSERY TYPE

Further comparative analysis was carried out to determine whether there are any particular trends in nursery food provided by different nursery types.

Nurseries have been categorised by the following types:

- Private nurseries
- Sure Start children's centres
- Voluntary run nurseries

There is very little variation in menus from Private and Public (Sure Start) sectors in relation to conformity to the CWT nutrient-based standards. It is the individual nursery, not the type, which determines the nutritional quality of the food it provides. There are examples of good and poor compliance within both sectors.

6.8 ANALYSIS BY NUTRIENT

Energy

The period up to the age of 5 years is particularly important as it is a time of rapid growth in muscles, bone tissues and brain development. A child needs energy to ensure optimum development.

In the UK, the majority of energy is obtained from Fat (51%) and Carbohydrates (36%), with the remaining 13% obtained from Protein:

In the UK the proportion of energy that under 5s currently get from carbohydrate and fat meets the recommendations and this study reveals that this proportion is broadly similar in the Liverpool nurseries analysed.

Table 8: Energy source against UK recommendations

Energy source	UK recommendation %	Liverpool nurseries % (averaged)
Carbohydrate	51	54
Fats	36	31
Protein	13	15

Total energy consumption across all nurseries is below UK recommendations. The Sefton study also found similar trends, with 75% of their nurseries below the DRV. The Sefton data however showed 3 (25%) of nurseries in the sample serving excess energy and this was not reflected in Liverpool.

Table 9: Energy consumption against target guidelines

Target:	903 kcal
Highest nursery in sample	858 kcal (95% of target)
Lowest nursery in sample	361 kcal (40% of Target)

Figure 21 FULL-DAY CARE - ENERGY ANALYSIS
 TARGET 903kcal PER DAY



Fat

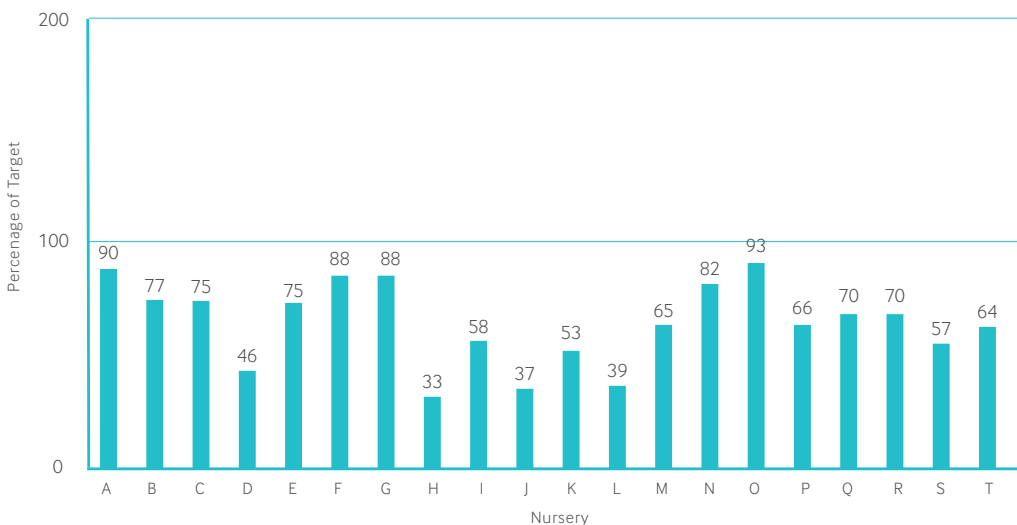
Some fat is crucial for a balanced diet and particularly so in the US as it provides some of the fat soluble vitamins (A, D and E). Therefore for this age group current recommendations show that fat should provide a higher percentage of energy intake than in older children.

Mirroring the Sefton data, all of the nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently fall within the maximum guideline for fat. However, the average percentage of energy provided by fat in the sample group is slightly below government recommendations (31% against recommended 36%).

Table 10: Fat consumption against national target

Target:	35.0g
Highest nursery in sample	32.6g (93% of target)
Lowest nursery in sample	11.6g (33% of target)

Figure 22 FULL-DAY CARE - FAT ANALYSIS
 TARGET 35.0kcal PER DAY



Carbohydrate

Carbohydrates are made up of 'starch' and 'sugars' which are broken down by the body and used as the bodies main source of energy.

None of the nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently meet the target guideline for total carbohydrate. Compared to 75% in the Sefton data (although this data focused on lunch only).

Although energy and carbohydrate levels are too low in every nursery in the sample, the percentage of energy provided by total carbohydrate is broadly in line with government recommendations (54% against recommended 51%).

Table 11: Carbohydrate consumption against national target

Target:	120.4g
Highest in sample	119g (99% of target)
Lowest in sample	47g (39% of target)

Sugars

The government recommends that the energy in the diet provided by non- milk extrinsic (NME) sugars is reduced to prevent tooth decay. In addition, foods high in NME sugars are typically calorie dense but lacking in other important nutrients. No more than 11% of energy should be provided by NME sugars. There is no evidence to suggest that children under 5 require diets that are higher in NME sugars. Indeed where it is the case this makes it difficult for the child to obtain the other nutrients essential for their bodies (Caroline Walker Trust 2006).

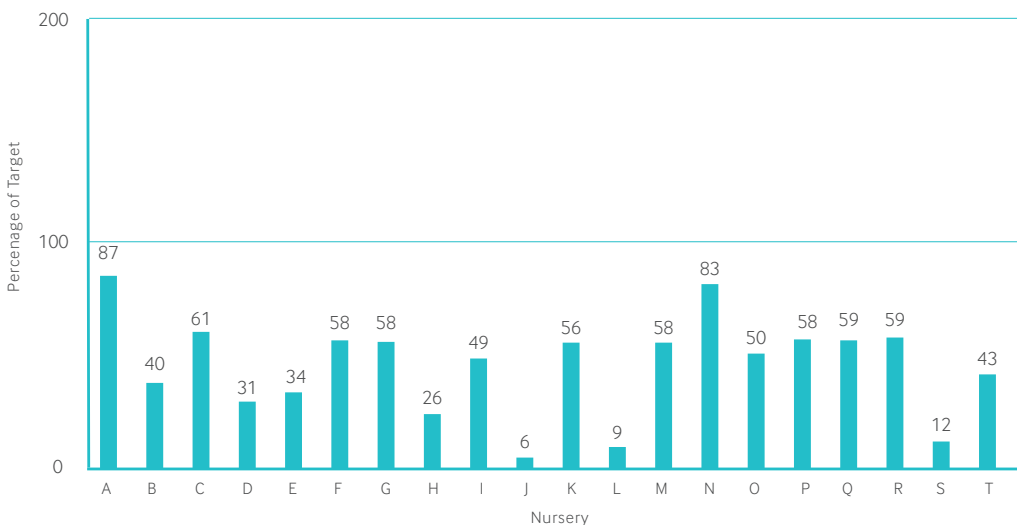
In a national survey, 1-4 year olds in the UK obtain about 20% of their energy from NME sugars²⁸, i.e. twice the recommendation.

All of the Liverpool nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently fall within the maximum guideline for NME sugars.

Table 12: NME Sugars against national maximum target

Maximum Target:	26.6g
Highest in sample	23g (87% of target)
Lowest in sample	2g (6% of target)

Figure 23 FULL-DAY CARE - NME SUGAR ANALYSIS
 MAXIMUM 26.6g



Protein

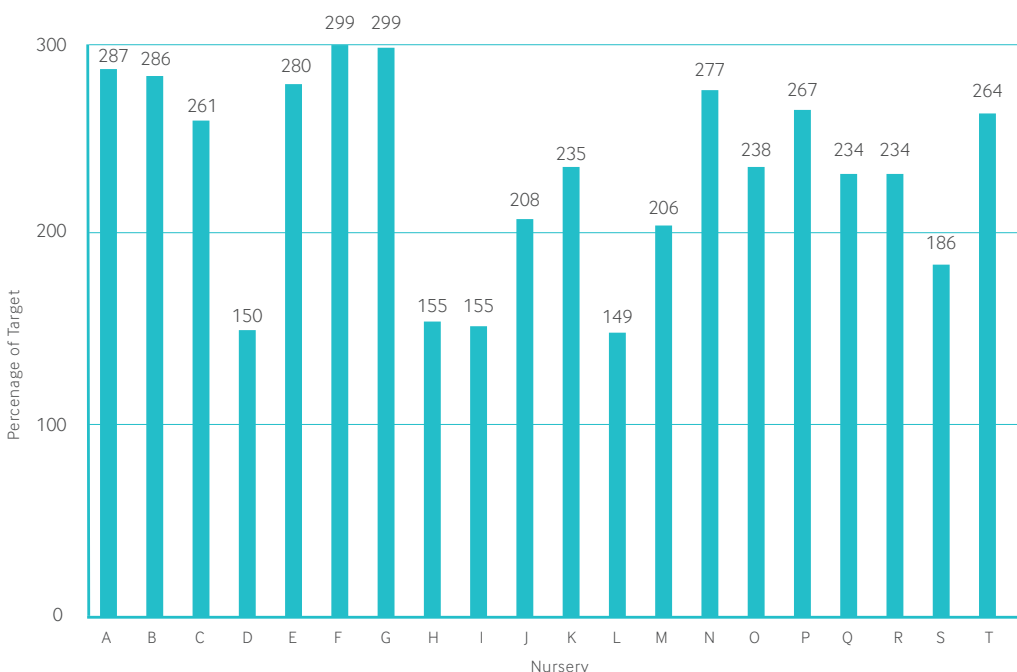
The proportion of protein required by a child is higher than that needed by adults. However, the majority of children in the UK have more than adequate intakes of protein in their diets.

The Liverpool data shows that all the Liverpool menu analysis sample, exceed the minimum requirements for protein. In Sefton a comparable figure showed 85% met the minimum standards.

Table 13: Protein consumption against national minimum target

Minimum Target:	11.0g
Highest in sample	33g (299% of minimum target)
Lowest in sample	16g (149% of minimum target)

Figure 24 FULL-DAY CARE - PROTEIN ANALYSIS.
 MINIMUM 11.0g



Iron

Iron deficiency can cause anaemia and limits the child’s ability to be physically active. It is suggested that iron deficiency in children has an immediate and longer term impact on intellectual performance and behaviour. In Britain, 84% of children have iron intakes below the Reference Nutrient Intake (RNI) and almost 20% have very low intakes. This national picture is reflected in the local data that demonstrates that none of the nurseries that provided full menu cycles currently meet the target guideline for iron.

Table 14: Iron consumption against national minimum target

Minimum Target:	5.5mg
Highest in sample	4.4mg (80% of target)
Lowest in sample	2.1mg (38% of target)

**Figure 25 FULL-DAY CARE - IRON ANALYSIS
 MINIMUM 5.5g**



Zinc

Zinc is important for the functioning of every organ in the body. It is needed to metabolise protein, fat and carbohydrate. It is also associated with insulin which regulates the body’s energy, and is important for wound healing. In a national study of 1-4 year olds, more than 70% of children had zinc intakes below the RNI. Again this is mirrored in the Liverpool data which demonstrates that none of the nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently meet the target guideline for Zinc.

Table 15: Zinc consumption against national agreed target

Minimum Target:	4.3mg
Highest in sample	4.0g (92% of target)
Lowest in sample	1.6g (38% of target)

Figure 26 FULL-DAY CARE - ZINC ANALYSIS
 MINIMUM 4.3g



Calcium

Calcium is required for building and maintaining bones, for the transmission of nerve impulses and muscle actions, and for several other body functions. The majority of under 5s have adequate calcium intakes. From the Liverpool data we can see that 40% of the nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently do not meet the target guideline for calcium, with one nursery only reaching 44% of the target.

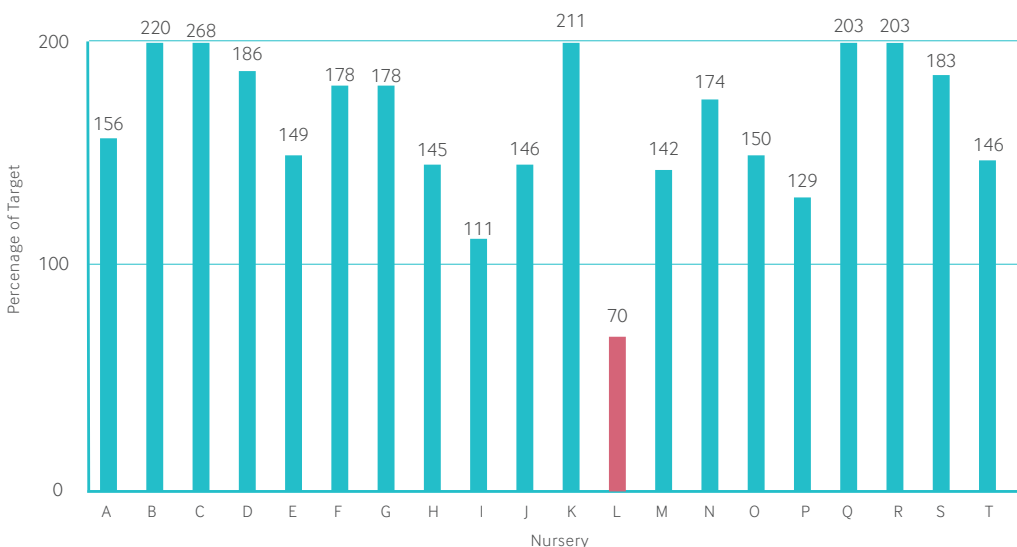
Figure 27 FULL-DAY CARE - CALCIUM ANALYSIS
 MINIMUM 260g



Vitamin C

Vitamin C helps to prevent disease and maintain good health. The body needs Vitamin C to produce and maintain collagen. It is also important for wound healing. From the Liverpool data only one nursery did not meet the minimum target for Vitamin C, only reaching 70% of the target level.

Figure 28 FULL-DAY CARE - VITAMIN C ANALYSIS
 MINIMUM 21mg

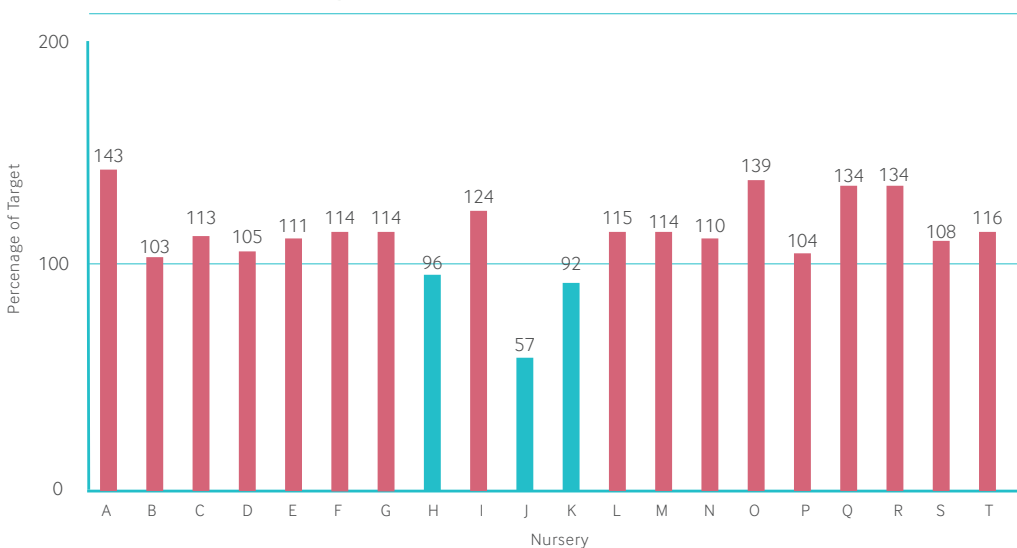


Sodium

Sodium / Salt is essential in the diet, but too much can be dangerous for young children (and indeed adults) leading to raised blood pressure. Whilst current targets for adults are set at 6g of salt per day – for children this target is far lower. The target for 1-3 year olds is no more than 2g salt (800mg sodium) per day with 3-5 year olds being slightly higher at 3g per day. Estimated statistics indicate that 1-4 year olds currently consume 3.3g-3.8g of salt (1,300-1,500mg of sodium) per day. 27 The Scientific Advisory Committee (2003) suggested that intakes for under 5s can be in the region of 5g daily. 26

Salt should not be added to the diet of the under-5s in cooking or at the table. The Liverpool data shows that 85% of the nurseries which provided full menu cycles currently exceed the maximum guideline for Sodium, with one nursery providing 143% of the recommended maximum. Only 3 of the nurseries in the sample came under the recommended maximum amount. This is significantly higher than the Sefton data which reported 70% of its lunch menu sample exceeded the recommended standard.

Figure 29 FULL-DAY CARE - SODIUM ANALYSIS
 MAXIMUM 630mg



Guidelines produced by the Food Standards Agency (2007)²⁹ say that salt should not be added during cooking. One nursery in the Liverpool sample (compared to zero in Sefton) stated that it did add salt during cooking. Two nurseries state that they use salt in stews and soups.

Figure 30 FULL-DAY CARE - SALT ANALYSIS
MAXIMUM 1.6g



7 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The strength of response from nurseries to both the questionnaire (38%) and the menu analysis (26%) demonstrates a strong commitment across the setting to healthy food provision. The response rate in terms of both nursery type and location of nursery was broadly representative of early years provision across the city.

The data should be treated with caution and it is important to highlight the limitations of this study.

- A It is a self selected sample (it was voluntary response). Therefore it may not be a true and accurate picture of food provision across the Liverpool early years setting.
- B Those not responding may have had less confidence in their knowledge of the topic area and / or the food they provide. Or they may simply have had insufficient capacity to complete the questionnaire and menu samples.
- C Over the past ten years there has been an increased national awareness of correct messages for healthy eating, such as 5-a-day, impact of processed foods, salts and obesity. Therefore questionnaire respondents may have been providing answers that they thought were right or that they thought the study wanted to hear.

However as the results are broadly in line with other reports in similar local authority areas we should treat the findings as a reasonable reflection of food provision in Liverpool early years settings. Indeed the limitations listed above may present a 'best case' scenario, which when examining the results make some findings more concerning.

7.1 FOOD POLICY

The report demonstrates that not all nurseries have a 'Food Policy' and certainly not a healthy eating policy. This goes against national guidelines for early years food providers. Whilst the study acknowledges the need to evaluate those food policies in more detail, Menu Matters report that 'of the food policies received, statements made are not reflected in the recipes'. This identifies an opportunity to support nurseries in both the production and adherence to a healthy eating policy.

7.2 COST

The average cost of a main meal per child in Liverpool nurseries is reported as £1 - £2. This figure compares favourably to an average cost in secondary school of £1.57.³⁰ We therefore feel that nurseries are spending sufficiently on food within their setting. However when considering the menu analysis there may be an opportunity to offer advice on ensuring optimum use of that spend to provide a nutritious meal in line with CWT guidance.

7.3 MENUS

Assessment of menu plans by nurseries in Liverpool is not systematic. Less than half of respondents reported to having their menus assessed for nutritional content and only 4% (2) reported that this assessment was carried out by a qualified nutritionist or health advisor. This is significantly less than comparable studies elsewhere on Merseyside. The data is supported by those nurseries giving reference to GDAs in menu planning with only around half the nurseries conducting this reference. The Menu Matters report shows that in many cases the menus set are indicative of inexperienced chefs.

This provides an excellent opportunity for Liverpool PCT (through dieticians and nutritionists) to offer a support package for nurseries in this area.

7.4 KNOWLEDGE

It is encouraging from the questionnaire that nurseries understand the importance of the nutritional quality of the food they serve to children in relation to their health. However only one in five nurseries strongly agreed that they have adequate knowledge in this area and this provides an opportunity to offer more support in this area.

7.5 TRAINING

There was some potential ambiguity in the questions relating to training and the responses received. Only 61% reported having a Basic Food Hygiene Qualification, which we assume is inaccurate due to the legal requirement on catering facilities to have this qualification. The data tends to indicate that respondents simply included the qualifications that met with the questions examples. These examples did not refer to specific healthy eating qualifications and would therefore give the potential that caterers or nursery managers did not report these qualifications. For these reasons we should consider revisiting this question.

The Liverpool responses though were broadly in line with those from similar studies in this area and reflect their response to nutritional knowledge. There is therefore a key requirement to support nurseries through targeted specific training focusing on under 5s nutrition. Due to the importance of the food environment and interaction of other nursery staff during meal times this training should be offered to a wider audience than those producing the meals and could involve nursery staff and nursery managers.

7.6 FOOD PROVISION

In comparing Liverpool with other local authority areas it is clear from the reported / analysed data that Liverpool is broadly in line with similar areas.

In light of current obesity trend data, it is interesting to note that all nurseries in Liverpool actually serve lower than the recommended levels for energy for this age group, offering an opportunity to consider portion size at meal and snack times. It is reassuring also that of the energy provided by food in Liverpool nurseries broadly meets the recommended break down by energy source (Carbohydrate, Fats and Protein).

In general, nurseries meet or exceed the vitamin requirements. This is reflected in the amount of fruit and vegetables served at meal and snack times. However we should note that some nurseries do not serve any fresh vegetables, only frozen and others do not use any vegetables within dishes like bolognaise (the sauce is just made with mince and gravy). It is also worth highlighting that nurseries are far more willing to serve fruit as snacks as opposed to vegetables.

Of greatest concern from the menu analysis are the levels of sodium / salt served to under 5s, with all but three nurseries serving excessive levels. Generally, this should not be attributed to additional salt used in cooking, although 1 nursery did report to adding salt during cooking – which goes against all guidelines. The majority of salt came from stocks and thickeners used in meal production. Many nurseries are also still serving high levels of processed foods which again are often 'salt rich'. Through basic education and training this can easily be reduced to below maximum guidelines.

Other areas of weakness relate to deficiencies across the menus of iron and zinc, both vital in the development of Under 5s. This is again attributable to lack of knowledge and training in menu planning and therefore supports the provision of specific healthy eating training for early year's staff and caterers.

8 RECOMENDATIONS

8.1 PROCESS

- 1 The report should be formally presented to a number of local boards and partnerships including the Liverpool First for Health and Wellbeing Partnership, the PCT and local authority boards and the LSP.
- 2 The report should be presented to key stakeholders across the city in a seminar format, to allow detailed discussion of the issues.
- 3 The report (or an executive summary) should then be circulated widely to key people across the city and beyond.
- 4 The report should be used to form a baseline for further evaluations to take account of progress in this area.

8.2 SUPPORT FOR EARLY YEARS

The following areas appear to have the greatest potential for improvement through additional support and should be discussed in detail by the wider partnership.

- 5 Development of a standard healthy eating policy for all early years settings in Liverpool
- 6 Development of a specific training package for pre-school caterers and nursery staff
- 7 Development of specific nutritional guidance support for under 5s aimed at parents and nursery staff.
- 8 Professional support for all early years settings in menu planning
- 9 The partnership should also consider and discuss the potential for further intervention relating to policy on early years food provision within the city.

9 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The report would like to acknowledge the support of:

- Kate McFadden. Liverpool PCT Infant Nutrition Programme Manager
- Nicky Dexter and Andrea Kelly. Menu Matters
- Gemma Weston. HM Partnerships Project Manager
- Julie Macklin and Ffion Lloyd-Williams. Heart of Mersey
- All participating nurseries

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