

FUEL US DON'T FOOL US SCHOOL FOOD

#1 An investigation into
Big Food in schools





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INTRODUCTION

Bite Back is a youth movement challenging the way unhealthy food is made, marketed and sold—especially to children—to protect the health of a generation from food-related illnesses and create a brighter, healthier future.

In 2024, Bite Back launched **'Fuel Us, Don't Fool Us'**, an investigation into the actions of the food giants that shape our food system. First, we found that 7 out of the top 10 food and drink manufacturers operating in the UK are reliant on selling unhealthy products. We also found that in 2022, they spent £55 million on online adverts for products from four food categories that are associated with children's excess sugar and calorie intake (biscuits, chocolate, crisps and ice cream).¹ A second investigation into the growth of the out-of-home sector found that big food chains such as Domino's, Subway and Greggs have opened nearly 1,000 more outlets within 400m of school gates compared to 2014.²

Given the size and influence of Big Food, and the millions of pounds spent to keep products in the spotlight, it's no wonder brands hold increasing levels of cultural significance—from Walkers crisps sponsoring football, Coca-Cola and Oreo partnering with Spotify, to McDonald's headlining an episode of Emily in Paris. It's a presence we have almost come to expect. But testimony from Bite Back's youth activists indicates that Big Food's reach doesn't stop at the school gates - its products are on sale in the canteen and its branding is showing up in creative ways.

Children spend 190 days a year at school, where about one-third of their daily food intake occurs³

- this will increase with the breakfast club pilot. Schools provide an exceptional opportunity to ensure that each child has the best possible start to life, by serving food that is nutritious, delicious and minimally processed. The school food standards (SFS) were introduced to ensure children and young people get the nutritious food that they need to be healthy, happy and to thrive.

The Government has committed to taking preventative action and "fixing the foundations of good health and protecting the next generation so that it can become the healthiest ever."⁴ We welcome its commitments to implement the junk food advertising restrictions on TV before 9pm and online, restrict the sale of energy drinks to under 16s and give councils powers to stop fast food takeaways opening near schools. We are also pleased the Government is developing a Food Strategy which will include a focus on health. But if we want to create the healthiest generation of children ever, then we need to go further and stem the power Big Food brands have over young people across all environments - and that includes through the presence of unhealthy food brands in schools.

This report is a snapshot of how food and drink companies sell and market to children and young people through schools, and provides a foundation for further research.



Testimony from Bite Back's youth activists indicates that Big Food's reach doesn't stop at the school gates—its products are on sale in the canteen and its branding is showing up in creative ways.

Marketing through schools: an old story, with fresh tactics

The use of schools as a marketing venue for brands, with the opportunity to build brand awareness and loyalty from a young age, is not new. In 2003, chocolate confectionery giant Cadbury ran Cadbury Get Active, a marketing campaign that encouraged children to buy chocolate bars in exchange for sports equipment.⁵ Until 2004, soft drinks giant Coca-Cola had 4,000 branded vending machines in 1,500 secondary schools across England, Wales and Scotland.⁶ New evidence from our report

shows this influence remains, with food and drink companies sponsoring events in schools and partnering with wholesale suppliers, caterers and other stakeholders to get their products, branding and messaging in schools. This was further backed up by a BMJ investigation published in December 2024, which pointed out that industry schemes help perpetuate the narrative of "personal responsibility and deflect attention from how commercial influences affect choice and behaviour".⁷ Big Food is shifting away from blatant tactics and instead finding more subtle ways to reach children and young people in education settings.

¹ Bite Back (2024). Fuel us, don't fool us: Are food giants rigging the system against children's health? (Manufacturers)

² Bite Back (2024). Fuel us, don't fool us: Big food & our communities: Where are food chains expanding? (Out-of-home #1).

³ Harrison, F., Jennings, A., Jones, A., Welch, A., van Sluijs, E., Griffin, S. and Cassidy, A. (2011). Food and drink consumption at school lunchtime: the impact of lunch type and contribution to overall intake in British 9–10-year-old children. Public Health Nutrition, 16(6), pp.1132–1139. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/s1368980011002321>.

⁴ UK Parliament (2024) <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-12-03/hlws275>

⁵ BBC (2003) 'Chocolate for footballs' scheme criticised <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2984069.stm#:~:text=Cadbury%20has%20been%20criticised%20for,exchange%20for%20school%20sports%20equipment>

⁶ The Guardian (2004). <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2004/jan/26/education.schools>

⁷ Wilkinson, E. (2024). Food industry has infiltrated UK children's education: stealth marketing exposed: BMJ, q2661–q2661. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.q2661>.

THE SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS

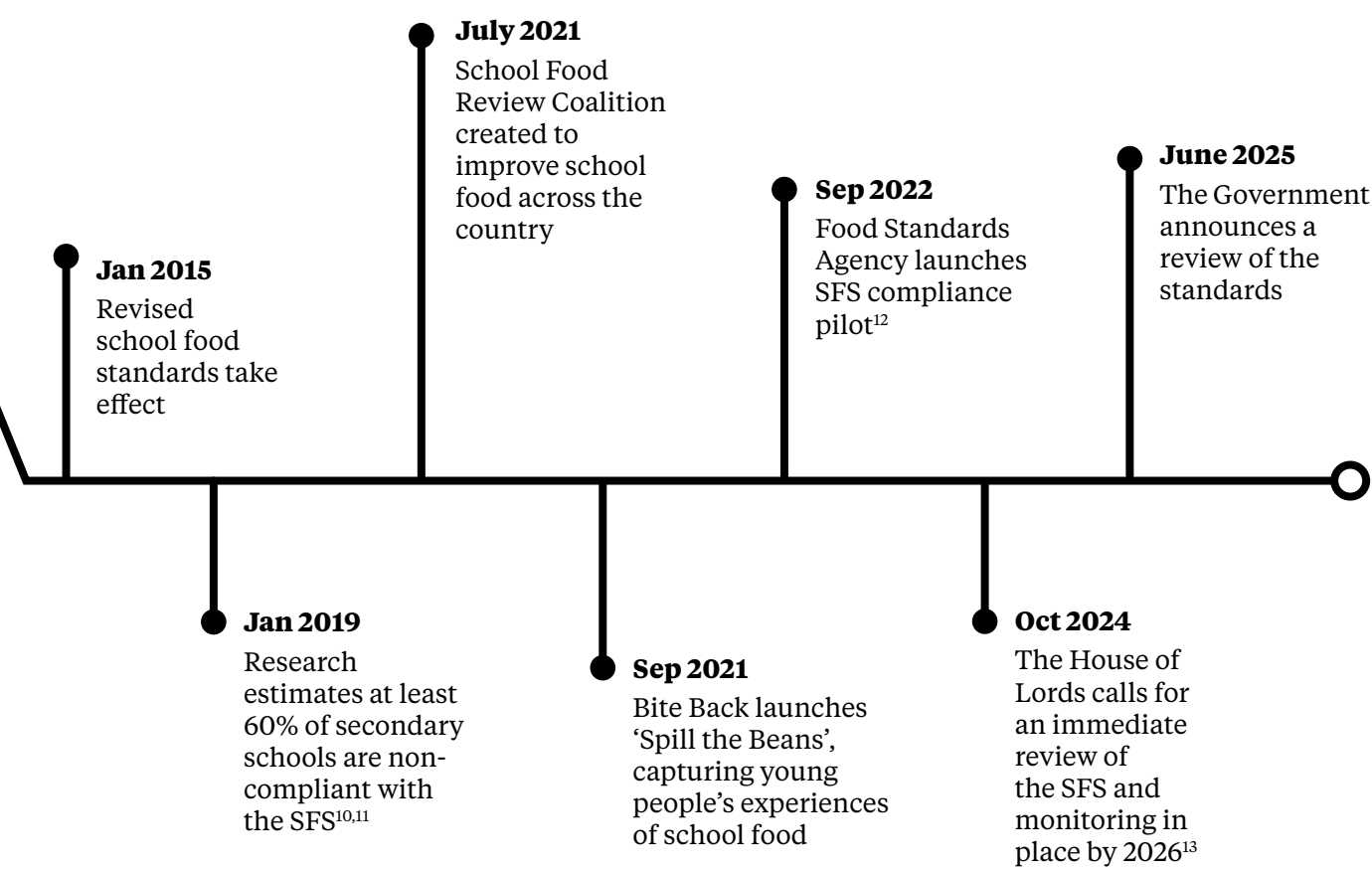
The school food standards exist to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they get the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day. Adherence to the school food standards is mandatory, but not for all educational settings. Early years settings, such as nurseries, only have voluntary standards. The standards do not apply to (non-school based) post-16 further education settings like sixth-form colleges. And there are exemptions to the school food standards, such as at parties or celebrations for religious or cultural occasions and at fundraising events.

Importantly, while quality assurance schemes like Food For Life or monitoring carried out by local authorities exist, there is no national or standardised monitoring scheme in England. As a result, the standards are not always being met, turning school food into a postcode lottery.⁸ A pilot scheme run by the Food Standards Agency in 2022 to test whether food safety officers could also monitor the SFS was promising. And health experts and government advisors have long been calling for the standards to be updated, to reflect the latest evidence on healthy and sustainable diets.

TIMELINE of the school food standards

SNAPSHOT of the school food standards⁹

Foods high in fat, sugar or salt*	Drinks	Fruit and Veg
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each weekNo snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fatNo confectionery, chocolate or chocolate-coated productsSchools can provide desserts, cakes and biscuits at lunchtime only and only if they contain no confectionery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plain waterFruit or vegetable juice (max 150 ml)Tea, coffee, hot chocolateLower fat milk or lactose reduced milk; plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk drinksAny combination of fruit/ veg juice with dairy (max 330 ml)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">One or more portions of fruit and one of vegetables every dayA dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times each weekAt least three different fruits and three different vegetables each week
<p>* The term high in fat, sugar or salt is used differently to the way a product would be deemed HFSS according to advertising restrictions using the nutrient profile model (NPM). In schools, this term is used to label any food product with any added fat, sugar and salt.</p>		



8 Food Foundation (2022) The Broken Plate 2022 [https://foodfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/FF_Broken_Plate_Report%2022_DIGITAL_UPDATED_2023.pdf](https://foodfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/FF_Broken_Plate_Report%202022_DIGITAL_UPDATED_2023.pdf)
9 Department for Education (2015) School food standards practical guide <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/school-food-standards-practical-guide>

10 Food For Life (2020). State of the Nation report into children's food in England 2019. Available at: www.foodforlife.org.uk
11 Impact on Urban Health (2020). Serving up children's health <https://urbanhealth.org.uk/insights/reports/serving-up-childrens-health>
12 Food Standards Agency (2023). School Food Standards Compliance Pilot: Discovery and Feasibility Research https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/FSADfE_SFS_Discovery_Phase_Report_FINAL.pdf
13 House of Lords: Food Diet & Obesity Committee (2024). Recipe for health: a plan to fix our broken food system <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5901/ldselect/ldmifo/19/19.pdf>

METHOD

Examples were collected between July and November 2024. Desk research was conducted to collect secondary evidence from news articles, catering websites, teacher resource databases, and company web pages, with searches restricted to the UK. This identified 65 distinct examples of food and drink companies marketing through schools, spanning 28 parent companies and their brands. Examples were provided by around 15 (predominantly secondary) schools and sixth-form colleges across England, through Bite Back's network

of young people, school caterers and local authorities.

The focus of this research is on the food and drink companies and therefore information that identifies schools has been removed.

This research relies on examples provided through Bite Back's network over a limited period of time, and is therefore a snapshot of how food and drink companies (and wholesalers and caterers) sell and market to children and young people through schools. Further investigation is needed to determine how widespread these practices are across all primary, secondary schools and post-16 education further education settings like sixth-form colleges, in England.

FINDINGS

The examples found have been grouped into five broad themes. Some of the findings are not new - back in 2021, Bite Back's Spill the Beans report on school food included youth insights, with participants talking about Skittles and other confectionery on offer. The desk research showed that the types of tactics have evolved over the years, partly in response to concern from public health experts. This investigation has also prompted reflection on the role of businesses in providing positive

The school started selling Skittles and Smarties and people are hoarding them because you can buy lots.

Youth testimony from 2021

opportunities for pupils, and what principles are needed specifically in the context of schools. We are particularly concerned about the impact of exemptions to the school food standards on young people at post-16 further education settings like sixth-form colleges.

¹⁴ Ehrenberg, A. et al. (2002) Brand advertising as creative publicity, Journal of Advertising Research, 42(4), pp. 7–18. doi:10.2501/jar-42-4-7-18.

¹⁵ Deloitte (2022) Brand marketing effectiveness study: Maximizing the value of brand marketing, Deloitte. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/brand-marketing-effectiveness-study.html>

TACTIC 1

Big Food uses schools as a venue for branding

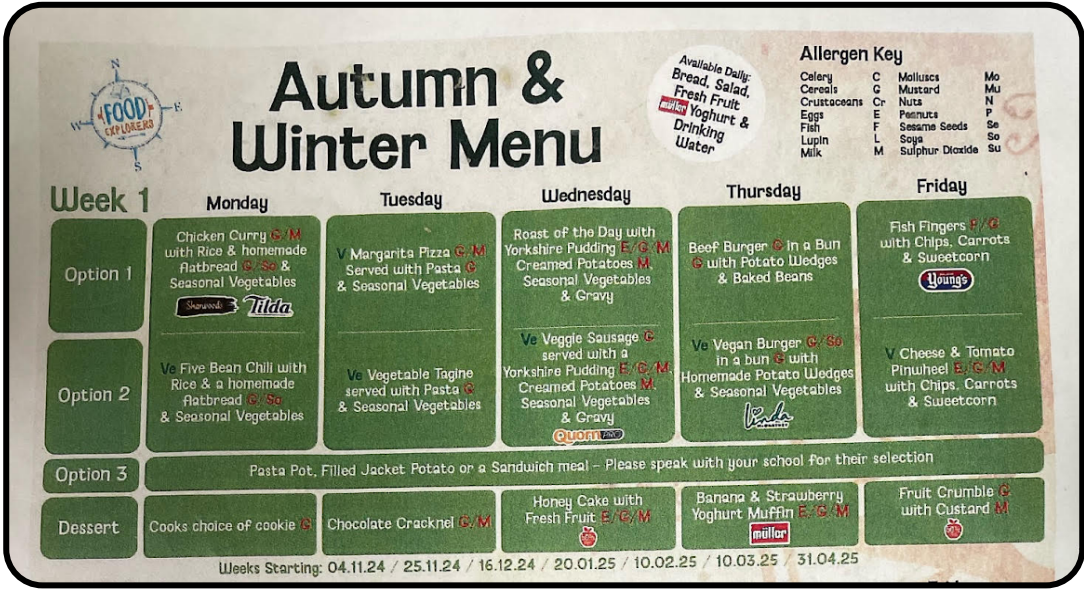
Brand marketing is an effective way for a brand to build awareness and create lasting salience in the consumer's mind.¹⁴ Think of McDonald's golden arches or Kellogg's Frosted Flakes mascot, Tony the Tiger - the use of logos, mascots or taglines can create lasting impressions without promoting a specific product. Deloitte found that 62% of long-time users of a certain brand were likely to develop an emotional attachment with it.¹⁵ One quarter of the 100 coolest brands according to Gen Alpha (7-14-year-olds) are food and drink companies—that includes fast food brands like Domino's, soft drink brands like Coca-Cola, chocolate confectionery brands like Cadbury, crisp brands

like Pringles and coffee shops like Starbucks.¹⁶

Brand affinity is problematic given the highly recognisable nature of many brands that predominantly sell unhealthy products. A survey of 11-16-year-olds found that when young people are prompted with the logos of popular food and drink brands such as Walkers, Cadbury and Coca-Cola, the majority associate them with an HFSS product in the portfolio, and not a healthier non-HFSS alternative.¹⁷

The example of the Coca-Cola logo featured on school vending machines was abandoned 20 years ago¹⁸, though it seems the goalposts have merely moved. In some sixth-form colleges, brands like Costa Coffee (owned by Coca-Cola) and Starbucks have set up entire outlets, and one sixth-form college student submitted a photograph of a Coca-Cola branded fridge.

A branded primary school menu with brand logos



¹⁶ Beano Brain (2024) Coolest Brands 2024. <https://25317339.fs1.hubspotusercontent-eu1.net/hubfs/25317339/Beano%20Brain/Beano%20Brain%20Content/Coolest%20Brands%2024-UK%20Mini%20Report-final.pdf>

¹⁷ Savanta / Bite Back 2030, March 2024 1,046 young people aged 11-16

¹⁸ The Guardian (2004). <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2004/jan/26/education.schools>



A Starbucks outlet at a sixth-form college, selling drinks such as the Pumpkin Spice Coffee Frappuccino, which contains a whopping 48g, or 12 teaspoons, of sugar.

“**The (Starbucks) food and drink options range from different types of coffee and frappes to fizzy drinks, and the food options are mainly doughnuts, brownies and other sweet treats.**

Sixth-form college student



A Coca-Cola branded fridge in a sixth-form college [has been removed since the photo was taken]

TACTIC 2

Big Food sponsors curriculum materials

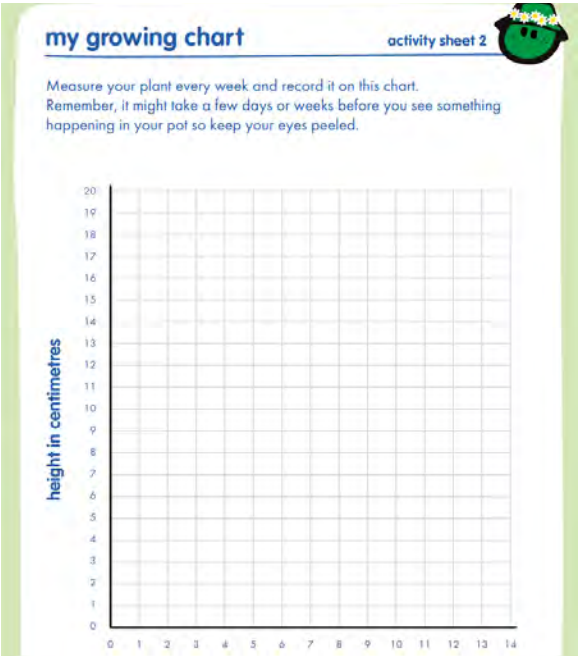
There is a window for industry to come in and provide materials, programmes and workshops, for example for tutor and PSHE periods. Greg Fell, president of the Association of Directors of Public Health, told The BMJ: “There is a wealth

of evidence to suggest that by being involved in school programmes, harmful products are normalised.”

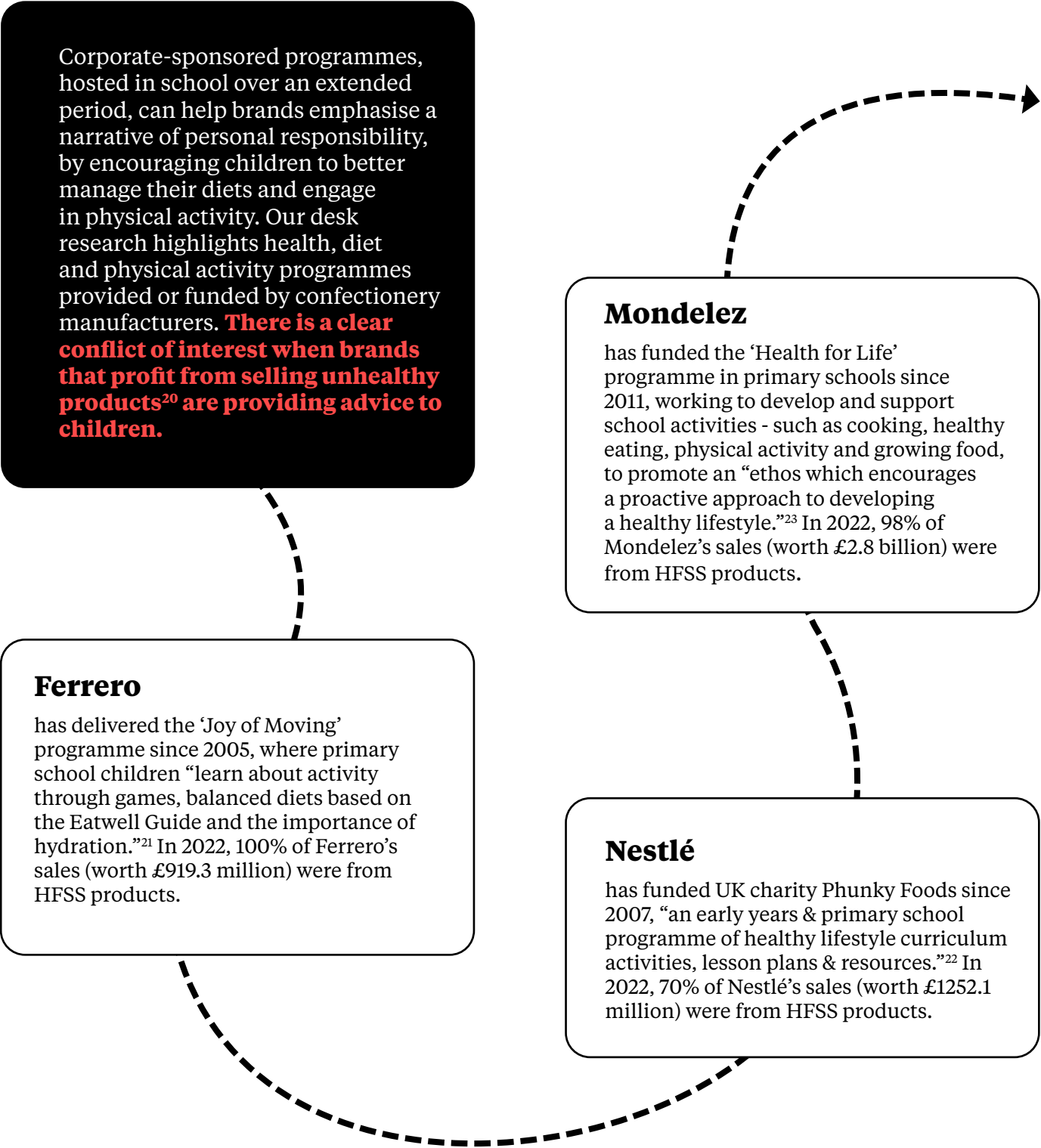
Corporate-sponsored materials have frequently been used to promote brand awareness and loyalty in the classroom.¹⁹ This is effective since content can be delivered to a captive audience in a credible setting, packaged up with a brand-friendly narrative. Materials include lesson plans, workbooks and activity sheets that feature brand imagery and/ or a selective narrative.



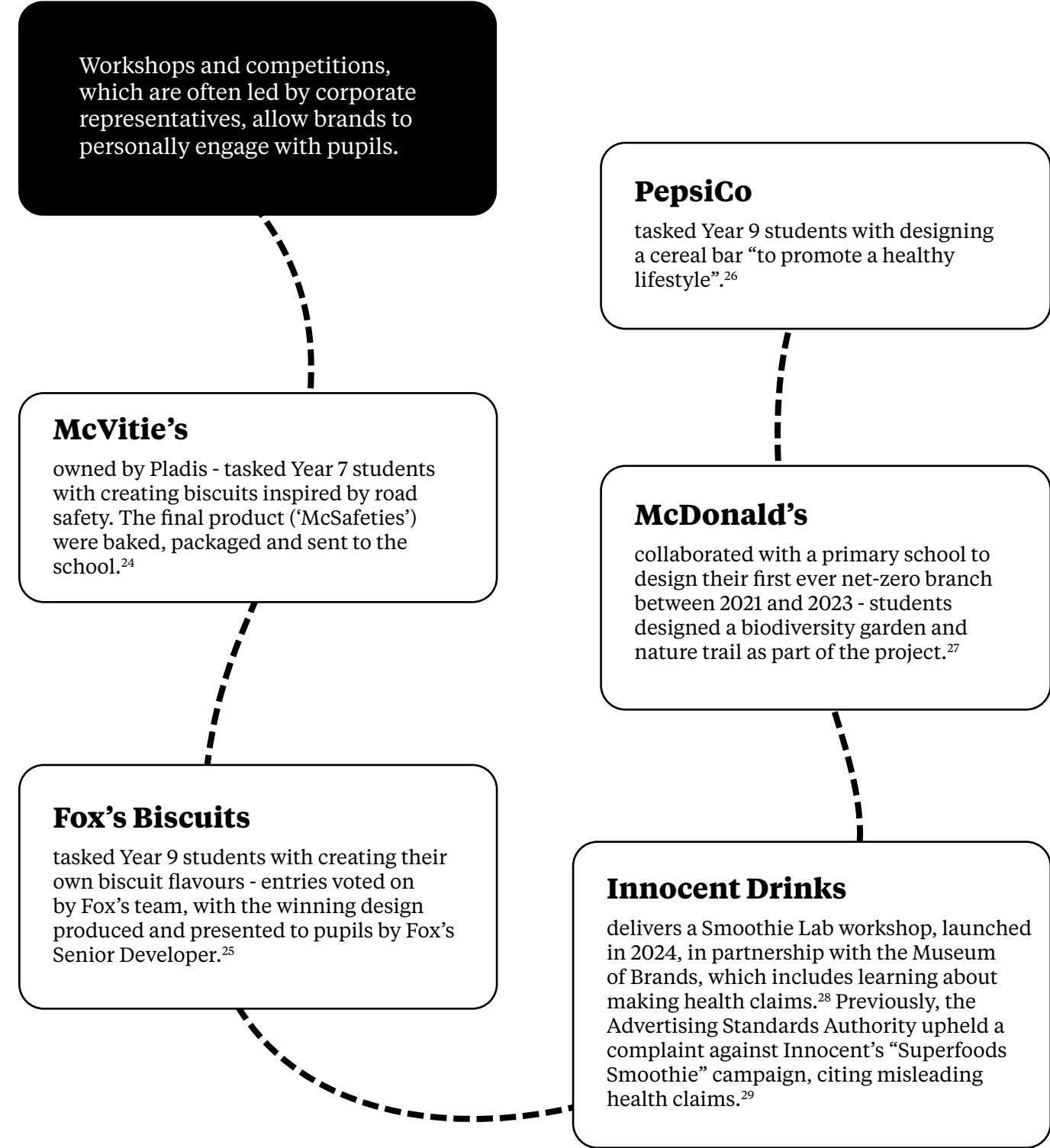
School caterer **ISS** partnered with **Innocent Drinks** (owned by Coca-Cola) on the 'Big Grow' initiative in 2020 - providing lesson plans and activity sheets to teach children about gardening.



¹⁹ Wilkinson, G. (2015). Marketing in schools, commercialization and sustainability: policy disjunctures surrounding the commercialization of childhood and education for sustainable lifestyles in England. Educational Review, 68(1), 56–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2015.1058750>



²⁰ Bite Back (2024). Fuel us, don't fool us: Are food giants rigging the system against children's health? (Manufacturers)
²¹ <https://www.ferrero.com/uk/en/people-planet/empower-people/joy-of-moving>
²² <https://www.phunkyfoods.co.uk/>
²³ <https://www.servicesforeducation.co.uk/health-for-life/>
²⁴ <https://ashby.nub.news/news/local-news/ashby-school-students-biscuit-baking-project-results-in-mcivitie-turning-them-into-a-product-165289>



²⁵ <https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Heckler-10.02.23.pdf>
²⁶ <https://www.leicesterhigh.co.uk/students-partner-with-pepsico-to-develop-cereal-bar>
²⁷ <https://marketdraytonjunior.co.uk/community/mcdonalds-project/>
²⁸ <https://museumofbrands.com/learn/smoothie-lab-workshop/>
²⁹ Financial Times (2007) Innocent guilty over smoothie health claims <https://www.ft.com/content/cf8a32f6-713c-11dc-98fc-0000779fd2ac>

TACTIC 3

Big Food hosts school trips

The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) recognises that educational visits outside the classroom offer students a valuable opportunity to engage with the National Curriculum, in ways that schools may not be fully equipped to provide.³⁰ However, there is currently no guidance on the specific content of such trips. Additionally, the school food standards do not apply to trips lasting less than 7 days. School trips hosted on company property allow brands creative license over the delivery of content, and may include a tour and cooking demonstrations featuring a meal. Our desk research found

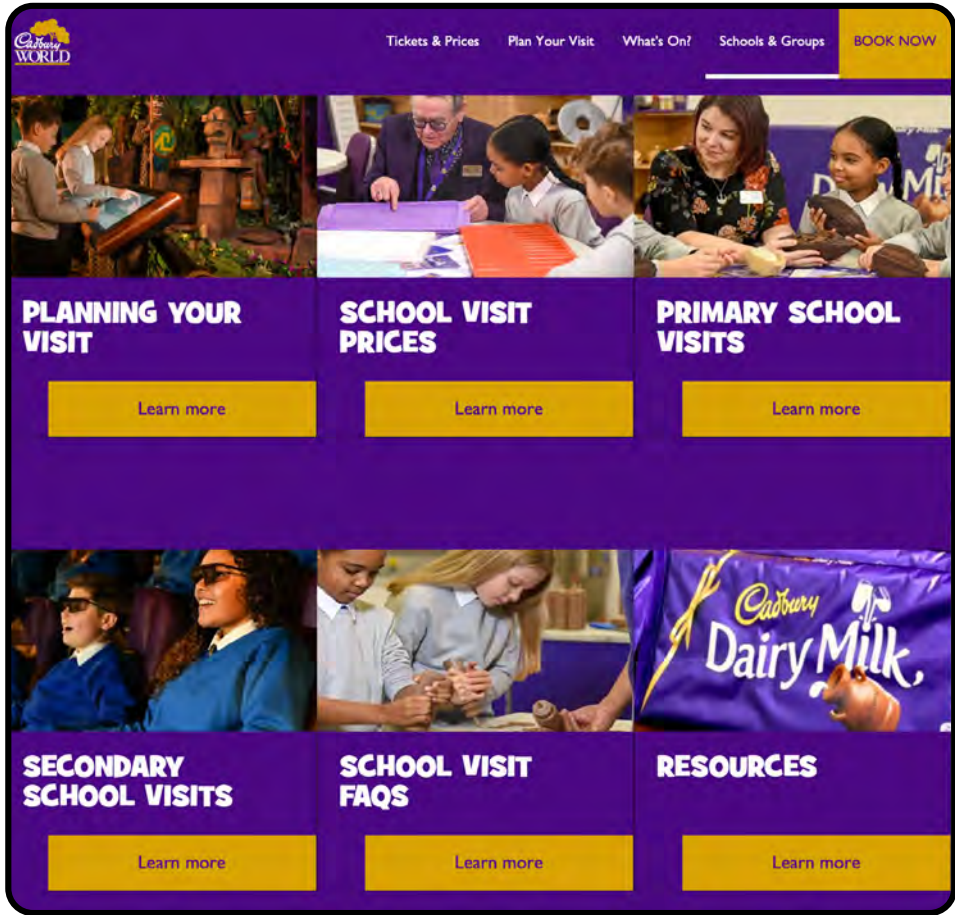
that examples from the out-of-home sector include visits to Pizza Express, Wagamama and Domino's.

Cadbury World in Birmingham hosts more than 2,000 school trips each year. Mondelez –Cadbury's parent company–says Cadbury World was created "to significantly enhance consumers' perceptions of Cadbury and develop long term brand loyalty."³¹ The attraction offers educational sessions for students, targeted at different key stages and which include the topics of consumer health, sustainability and marketing.^{32,33} Accompanying workbooks feature Cadbury branding and products. In 2022, 98% of Mondelez's sales came from unhealthy products³⁴; 100% of its products deemed appealing to children were unhealthy;³⁵ and the company is not on track to fulfilling its climate commitments.³⁶



Cadbury World was one of my favourite places when I was younger. I know most of my friends went on trips when they were in school and then I also went with my school. I remember I saved up all my pocket money so I could buy loads of chocolate in the shop, but they also made sure we learnt about Cadbury and included Birmingham history in it, to show to young people that it is a massive part of Birmingham, with all the houses built for the workers in Bournville. So there was this strong idea that it's an essential part of Birmingham and its history.

Harrison, 18



Cadbury School visits website:
<https://www.cadburyworld.co.uk/schools-and-groups/schools/>

Education sessions run by Big Food have been criticised in the past. In 2018, **Coca-Cola announced it would scrap its UK education centres, which 100,000 children had visited over a decade.**³⁷

³⁰ The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (2023). The National Curriculum and Learning Outside the Classroom <https://oeapng.info/download/1058/?tmstv=1733827612>
³¹ Mondelez International (2016). An overview of Cadbury World: its origins, history and operations <https://www.cadburyworld.co.uk/media/bl4bo511/case-study-2016-v3.pdf>
³² <https://www.cadburyworld.co.uk/schools-and-groups/schools/keystage-1-2-primary/>

³³ <https://www.cadburyworld.co.uk/schools-and-groups/schools/keystage-3-4-5-secondary/>
³⁴ Bite Back (2024). Fuel Us, Don't Fool Us: Are food giants rigging the system against children's health?
³⁵ Bite Back (2024). Fuel Us, Don't Fool Us: Are food companies using child-appealing tactics responsibly? (Manufacturers #2)
³⁶ Bite Back (2024). Fuel Us, Don't Fool Us: Can food giants be trusted with planetary health?
³⁷ The Times (2018). Coca-Cola ends factory trips for children amid obesity fears <https://www.thetimes.com/article/coca-cola-ends-factory-trips-for-children-amid-obesity-fears-g0b0jr37l>

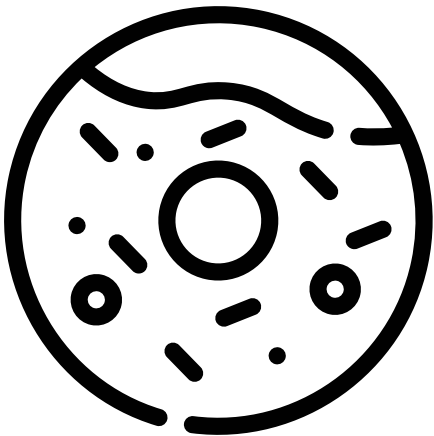
TACTIC 4

Big Food has woven itself into school fundraisers and rewards

Many food companies have corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These are not without controversy, as partnerships can overlook potential conflicts of interest and unintended consequences for public health. Issues include shifting blame away from industry and onto consumers³⁸ (to avoid regulation); and creating a health halo effect, i.e. giving consumers the false perception that a product is healthy.³⁹ CSR is problematic when initiatives involve brands that predominantly sell unhealthy products, and given that

disadvantaged communities that are the recipients are already more likely to be affected by food-related illness. During the COVID-19 pandemic for example, some brands came under fire for their donations of unhealthy products to key workers. Researchers at the University of Edinburgh noted they were “signalling virtue while promoting harm,” citing examples such as Krispy Kreme delivering doughnuts to hospital staff.⁴⁰

Our investigation suggests Big Food has also woven itself into school fundraisers and rewards - which are currently exempt from the school food standards. The relationship between a school and food company is not always clear from examples found online, i.e. in which cases a school purchases items at full price, or when items may be discounted or even donated by a company to a school.



“Before my 4-year-old even started school, we received a digital flyer from the PFA advertising a fundraiser with Krispy Kreme doughnuts. The flyer was branded and it struck me that it wasn’t just a bake sale but specifically a ‘Krispy Kreme doughnut sale.’ It took place after school on a Friday, I think to fit into the idea of an end-of-the-week treat. A large table was set up with dozens of boxes of Krispy Kreme doughnuts outside reception, which most students passed on their way out. It felt like pretty much every student and parent left the school with either a box of doughnuts or a doughnut in their hand.

Primary school parent

³⁸ Herrick, C. (2009), Shifting blame/selling health: corporate social responsibility in the age of obesity. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 31: 51-65. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9566.2008.01121.x>
³⁹ Peloza, J., Ye, C., & Montford, W. J. (2015). When Companies Do Good, Are Their Products Good for You? How Corporate Social Responsibility Creates a Health Halo. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 34(1), 19-31. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.13.037de>
⁴⁰ NCD Alliance, SPECTRUM Consortium (2020) Signalling Virtue, Promoting Harm - Unhealthy commodity industries and COVID-19 <https://ncdalliance.org/resources/signalling-virtue-promoting-harm>

Krispy Kreme Fundraising Doughnuts

Krispy Kreme offers discounted Original Glazed doughnuts for fundraising events, such as for Parent & Friends Associations.

A glazed ring doughnut contains 12g of sugar - that’s half the maximum recommended intake of sugar for children aged 7 to 10.



The Year 6s are incredibly grateful for our donation from @Dominos_UK in New Cross! A tasty treat for our sleepover - thank you very much! #community #treats #endofyear #memorable #onceinalifetime



8:37 PM · Jun 14, 2024 · 191 Views

Pizza Delivery

A primary school posted on X about a donation of Domino's pizzas for its Year 6 pupils.

A secondary school posted online about its 'attendance pizza party reward', for which pizzas from Papa John's were supplied to Year 9 and 10 students.

Freddo Friday

Some primary and secondary schools use 'Freddo Fridays' to encourage and reward students for anything from remembering to bring their laptop to class, to recognising the week's star pupils.

A Freddo bar contains 10g of sugar. In 2019, the Advertising Standards Authority ruled that Cadbury had breached rules designed to protect children from being targeted with junk food adverts, by placing a campaign for Freddo on bus stops outside primary schools.



TACTIC 5

Big Food sells unhealthy products in schools

Packaged crisps and confectionery from well-known brands, such as Walkers, McCoy's, Pringles and Cadbury, are sold in schools and colleges. Not only do they fail to comply with the school food standards, but these products are associated with children's excess sugar and calorie intake and typically classified as high in fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS).

The school food standards recommend water to be the default drink in schools and do not allow most carbonated soft drinks, yet variations of Coca-Cola, Dr Pepper, Fanta, Sprite and Pepsi appear front and centre on offer at some secondary schools. Young people participating in the Bite Back in Schools programme have reported broken water fountains or long queues for tap water at their schools, which further pushes them towards having to buy drinks.

These examples highlight the need to understand the role Big Food may be playing to facilitate the availability of these products in schools - for example by working with wholesale suppliers that in turn provide the products to caterers and schools.



McCoy's, Doritos⁴¹, Hula Hoops, Tyrell's, Walkers Monster Munch on sale at a secondary school

Cereal bar with chocolate on sale at a secondary school



Chocolate-covered rice cakes and Oreos on sale at a secondary school

⁴¹ In 2024, PepsiCo reformulated Doritos to make them non-HFSS



Pringles and Kettle crisps on sale at a secondary school

Confectionery including Cadbury chocolate bars, Twix, Maltesers, Mars, Kinder Bueno and Skittles on sale at a sixth-form college



Dr Pepper, Pepsi Max and Fanta on sale at a sixth-form college, with labels for Coke and Coke Zero on the shelf above

On the website of wholesale supplier Brakes, PepsiCo puts Walkers crisps in the spotlight as “the #1 crisps brand in education.”
Bite Back's previous investigation found that 68% of PepsiCo's sales were from HFSS products in 2022.

PepsiCo brand Walkers crisps on sale at a sixth-form college



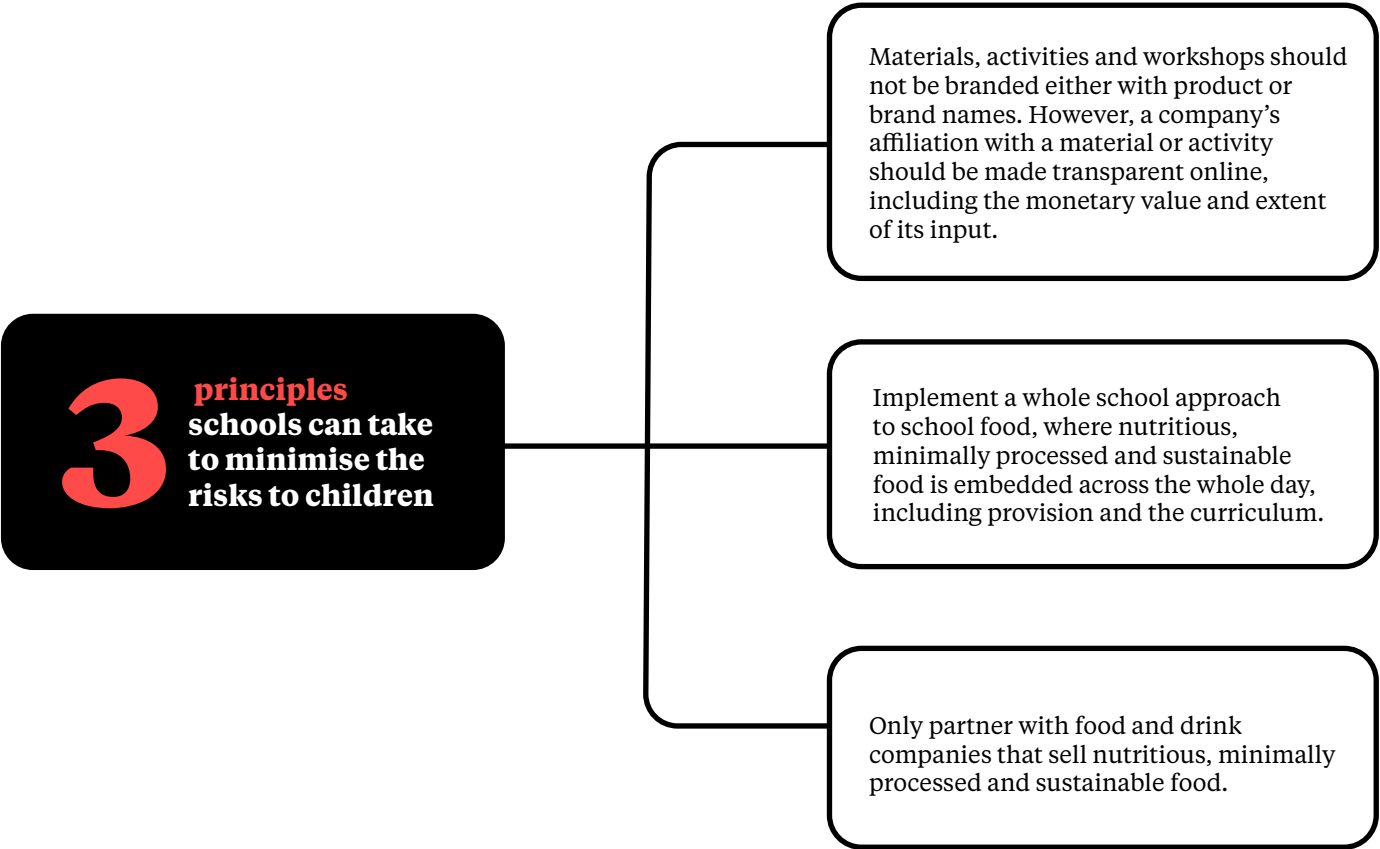
BIG FOOD MARKETING IN SCHOOLS

through the lens of commercial determinants of health (CDoH)

Big Food spends enormous amounts of money shaping our surroundings to drive sales of its products. Young people are especially at risk from commercial determinants of health (CDoH), which are the activities driven by corporate entities that affect people's health. In the case of marketing through schools, industry may instead refer to this as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). On the surface, educational materials and activities appear to

benefit schools, staff and pupils, by providing information or a taster of career opportunities. However, in reality, the majority of these initiatives are designed to propagate the dominant narrative around food and health, which is one of personal responsibility instead of system failure. Industry may want to project a responsible brand image to pupils and their parents; channel messaging that positions industry as part of the solution or distract attention from its aim to maximise shareholder profit. This in turn may make it more difficult for policymakers to implement prevention policy.

It is fair to say that schools cannot offer the same learning opportunities for their pupils as food and drink businesses, for example when it comes to visiting a factory. And the funding and resource pressures on schools make these opportunities hard to turn down. It is impossible to weigh up the potential benefits and risks for each individual case. There are however some principles schools can take by which to minimise the risks to children, including:



CONCLUSION

Young people feel overwhelmed by the bombardment of junk food advertising and by the flood of unhealthy options. School is the only place where the Government can make sure all children receive nutritious, minimally processed and sustainable food. The full extent to which food and drink businesses make use of the tactics presented in this report is unclear. But we should recognise this activity for what it is - brands forming affinity with children that they aim to last a lifetime, and presenting a narrative

that emphasises personal responsibility and deflects attention from the health harms of their products. It is clear that this needs to be an area of focus to understand the full impact this is having on our young people. Our investigation has left us particularly concerned about sixth-form colleges - those that are part of secondary schools (even those in a separate building or on a different site) should be meeting the school food standards.

The Government has already shown its commitment to child health and it has the opportunity to create a gold standard for a whole school approach to food.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe the Government should review and recognise the damaging presence that the unhealthy food and drinks industry has in schools. It should:

- Introduce a school food accountability framework to enable providers to meet school food standards by providing clear guidelines, sufficient support and accountability measures.
- Update the school food standards to enable all schools to provide meals that reflect the latest nutrition and sustainability standards.
- Ensure compliance with the school food standards is expanded across all education settings, from early years to further education.
- Write to every headteacher of a secondary school with a sixth-form college with a reminder that the standards apply.
- Close exemptions to the school food standards, to ensure fundraising, school trips and other events are coherent with public health priorities.
- Include schools and school educational materials in all future regulation of food and drink marketing.
- Advise schools to reject all future branded sponsorship of, and educational materials and resources branded by unhealthy food and drinks businesses and their representative organisations.

Bite Back also pledges to be an active part of the solution. The Bite Back in Schools programme empowers teams of young people to lead social action projects, who seek to improve the provision and culture of food in their school.

APENDIX I: BUSINESS RESPONSES

Publishing the responses does not reflect any endorsement or support of a business’s position from Bite Back.

Domino’s

“At Domino’s, we’re committed to marketing responsibly. Our Responsible Marketing Policy applies across our entire system, including all franchise partners, and sets a clear standard - that we do not target under-18s. We are aware of the concerns raised by Bite Back regarding a pizza donation to school children. This activity does not align with our policy, and we are urgently investigating. We are engaging with BiteBack to understand the full details to ensure it does not happen again.”

Ferrero

“The Joy of moving programme is designed to inspire children to get active through play and learn about the importance of a balanced and varied diet in line with the NHS Eatwell Guide. It is delivered by our charitable partners, EFL in the Community and the SPFL Trust, and is welcomed by schools and parents. Joy of moving is a fully unbranded social responsibility programme. Children never receive, or are exposed to, any Ferrero brand products, product promotion or marketing.”

Kellanova

A spokesperson for Kellanova, the company which owns Pringles, said, “We do not target the education sector with products which are not School Approved Foods. The Pringles featured in this research will have been bought at the discretion of the school or outlet selling the food.”

McDonald’s UK & Ireland

“McDonald’s is committed to being a more sustainable business. Our Market Drayton restaurant, the first certified to the UKGBC Net Zero Standard, offered a unique opportunity to engage the local community. Co-creating the biodiversity garden and nature trail was designed specifically to inspire young people about sustainability and the natural environment. We believe passionately in responsible community engagement and are proud to work with the school’s ‘eco-warriors’ to drive a positive local change. Across the UK & Ireland, young people tell us they care deeply about the environment and want to be actively engaged in finding solutions.”

Nestlé

“Nestlé has voluntarily introduced industry-leading responsible marketing practices. We do not direct marketing communications to children in education facilities for under-16s. We proudly support PhunkyFoods to improve the dietary and physical activity habits of young children across the UK. Our support for PhunkyFoods is entirely financial and we agree that our brands should not be visibly associated with the programme in schools. PhunkyFoods is entirely independent, there is no Nestlé or product branding on any educational materials, and we do not contribute to the delivery of the programme.”



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