

Section 3

Practical exercise 6: Communication and engagement

The vision set out in Better Eating, Better Learning (BEBL) relies on how well teachers, caterers and suppliers, working in partnership, are able to engage with key stakeholders – children and young people, their parents, and others in the wider community.

In this exercise, participants can draw on ideas generated during previous discussions to think about the role that different stakeholders have in achieving BEBL's vision, and how they could encourage their 'buy in'.

Working in small groups participants can be asked to look at one, or all, of the following:

- **Children and young people**

Children and young people are at the heart of BEBL and should be at the forefront of any decision-making. Think about what BEBL wants to achieve. Discuss, and make notes on, the following:

- What role do children and young people have in helping to secure the best chance of success for what BEBL is trying to achieve? Consider **a)** What we need to know about their current knowledge, skills and attitudes; and **b)** What knowledge, skills and attitudes they may need in the future.
- What approaches can we use to find out what children know and think, and how will we ensure they inform all forthcoming in decision-making relating to BEBL?
- What approaches can we use to move children and young people forward in the direction that BEBL advocates?



For useful information you can check BEBL and the BEBL Self-Evaluation Tool:

Read the BEBL section on [Communication and Engagement](#).

Read the section on Communication and Engagement in the BEBL [Self-Evaluation Tool](#).

Need some inspiration?

Participants in previous workshops have discussed pupils' knowledge about: the links between food, physical health and mental wellbeing, including their ability to concentrate; how their food choices are influenced by advertising and marketing; how food is produced, stored and prepared for consumption; and the links between food and environmental sustainability.

They also discussed techniques such as surveys, whole-school audits and social media to find out what children think and inform BEBL decision-making, and making the most of Curriculum for Excellence to provide rich, practical opportunities for pupils to extend the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills including growing their own food, and getting involved in both preparing and marketing their school meals.

Parents or carers

- The influence of parents or carers can often be overlooked yet they have a critical role to play. Think about what BEBL hopes to achieve and discuss, and make notes on the following:
 - What role could parents or carers have in helping to secure the best chance of success for what BEBL hopes to achieve? Consider **a)** How much do they currently understand about the wider context for school food and food education?; **b)** What attitudes and knowledge about school food and food education will they need in the future?; and **c)** What more could parents do to help implement BEBL?
 - What approaches can you use to help ensure parents buy in to the BEBL vision and are pro-actively engaged and involved in its implementation?

Others

- No single professional, or group of professionals, can achieve success working alone. BEBL relies on partnership working between education, health, catering, suppliers, and others in the wider community, such as local businesses.
 - Make a list of who you need to engage to work in partnership.
 - What role will each of these partners play? Consider **a)** How much do they currently understand about the wider context for school food and food education?; **b)** What attitudes and knowledge about school food and food education will they need in the future?; and **c)** How might each partner contribute to BEBL implementation?
 - What approaches can you use to encourage and support partnership working?