



**ORTON C.E. SCHOOL**

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## NEWS RELEASE

### Orton School awarded for its healthy food achievements

Even with schools currently closed for COVID-19, Orton CofE School has received some good news and hard-won recognition. Orton has been awarded the Food for Life Bronze Award for its healthy and climate-friendly food culture.

The school has been working with Food for Life, supported by Westmorland Family Limited, for a number of years, developing the school's food culture by connecting the staff, children and their families with sustainable and healthy food.

"As part of the Bronze award scheme, we're committed to serving seasonal school meals and sourcing sustainable food," says head teacher, Mrs Emma Pomfret. "We've been able to build on a long tradition of locally-sourced and freshly-prepared food at Orton - the Bronze target is 75% of meals freshly-prepared and our school cook, Pauline Davidson has been aiming for 100% for years! "

As part of the scheme, every pupil has had the opportunity to visit a farm, cook for themselves and participate in growing food too. "Many of our children are from farming families," says Mrs Pomfret, "so we've tried to develop that part of the scheme even further, not only visiting a local dairy farm but also following that milk to a big processing centre for Nestlé near Carlisle. Our

gardens were already being used to grow limited produce but we've added a poly tunnel so that the children can grow even more. And one of the highlights of Food for Life for many of our children was the day that we made (and ate) our own sausages, working with David Morland from Westmorland's butchery."

Other activities that have formed part of the Food for Life experience at Orton have been a consultation with parents about school menus and a shift from "flight trays" to proper plates and dishes for school dinners.

"Three years ago, we had no choice on our lunch menus other than a vegetarian option each day," explains Mrs Pomfret. "Now, there's a choice as well as a jacket potato option and we've still managed to keep prices as low as possible. It's all involved a lot of work for staff, especially Mrs Davidson and Mrs Douthwaite in our school kitchen, but 100% of our children have the school dinners and their enthusiasm for eating and growing their food is as strong as ever. It's lovely that the Food for Life scheme means that this is recognised and appreciated."

## **ENDS**

**Caption:** Members of the School Council from Orton CofE School celebrating the Food for Life Bronze Award (picture taken before social distancing measures)

For enquiries about Food for Life contact [ffl@soilassociation.org](mailto:ffl@soilassociation.org) 0117 314 5180 or [www.foodforlife.org.uk](http://www.foodforlife.org.uk)

## **Notes to editors**

**Food for Life** has created network of over 4,500 schools across England committed to transforming their food culture. It supports them to provide fresh, well-sourced and nutritious meals and improve their overall lunchtime experience. It helps children, adults and teachers understand the importance of good nutrition and where their food comes from through practical cooking and growing activities and farm visits. Food for Life is a Soil Association programme, bringing together the practical expertise of national partners Focus

on Food, Garden Organic and the Health Education Trust. To find out more, visit [www.foodforlife.org.uk](http://www.foodforlife.org.uk)

**Food for Life Bronze Award criteria:**

**Bronze** schools serve seasonal meals that are at least 75% freshly prepared by a well-trained school cook. Pupils and parents are involved in planning improvements to school menus and the dining experience via a school nutrition action group, boosting school meal take-up. Every pupil has the opportunity to visit a farm during his or her time at school, and opportunities are given for cooking and food growing activity.

The website for Orton CofE School is at [www.orton.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.orton.cumbria.sch.uk)

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