

Achieve your Award Criteria with Food for Life Get Togethers

Get Togethers can kick-start the journey for a school becoming a go-to growing and cooking skills hub for the whole community.

Going for Gold means putting your own stamp on what Food for Life means for your school, in your own community.

Any Food Education or Community and Partnerships criteria can be achieved through various regular events you are holding, including Get Togethers.

Here are our top tips on how Get Togethers can help you achieve your Bronze and Silver status on the road to Gold.

Bronze

Hosting a Food for Life Get Together could plant the seed for a very productive year, culminating in your Bronze award. Our Action Plan guidance combined with your creative thinking and forethought will refine your Whole Setting Approach (WSA). You'll be harvesting that award in no time.

Food Culture

2.0 – Our School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) has led a review of food culture in our school, and actions have been agreed

Why not task your SNAG to help with:

- plan the event
- engage staff, children, parents and the wider community
- promote a shift in food culture as a result of the Get Together
- run a review of ‘what worked well’ and ‘event would be better if’, with a focus on ‘Good Food’ – this will help plan what type of event to host next.

2.1 – We monitor school meal take up and act to improve the take up of free school meals

A Get Together is a great opportunity to promote school meals:

- Your SNAG can compile a family survey to discover what families want from school meals.
- You can feature a display comparing packed lunches and school meals nutritionally, and also highlight how money and time can be saved eating school meals.

2.2 – We consult with our pupils and parents on school meal improvements – as 2.1

Include in your survey what children and parents like or dislike about school meals, the dining environment, ideas for systems to encourage healthy choices, good manners and food quality.

2.3 – We keep parents informed of lunch menus and Food for Life activity and invite them to attend our school lunches

- Ensure menus are displayed at the event highlighting freshly prepared meals, local and organic ingredients and the welfare standards of animal produce.
- Children can make table talkers to highlight the work they’ve achieved this year.
- Invite the SNAG to explain how FFL works around school at a display.
- Children can talk to parents and the community about growing, cooking, farming, and events which have already taken place involving the community, encouraging them to come into school to help with future Get Togethers.

2.4 – We encourage our pupils to suggest improvements to the dining experience and we implement the best ideas – Survey at event as 2.1 and 2.2.

2.5 – Our lunchtime supervisors promote a calm and positive dining experience and help our pupils with food choices Inviting guests in for lunch models the importance of eating together and provides an opportunity for students to pick up healthy eating habits and routines from the community, including older generations who can benefit just as much as your pupils do!

2.6 – We have made a commitment to phase out flight trays

Why not use your Get Together to raise money for proper crockery? Children can explain why the school wants to change to plates and bowls.

Food Education

3.0 – We use the topic of healthy and sustainable food as a theme for assemblies

This is a great opportunity to teach the benefits of sustainable farming.

- An assembly around the good food that will be involved at your event could be used to promote healthy eating.
- If you are growing food for the event, use it as an opportunity to talk about organic principles.

3.1 – Our pupils take part in regular cooking activities that meet the Cooking and Nutrition of the Design and Technology programme of study. This is linked to our Whole Setting Approach (WSA)

Including cooking activities in preparation of a community event is a textbook example of your WSA.

- Split recipes between Key Stages so that the whole school is involved.

Or

- Split the preparation of ingredients between Key Stages according to skill requirement.
- This will strengthen how your students interact with the community, building school pride and goodwill.

3.2 – Our pupils have the opportunity to grow and harvest food and make compost – this is linked to wider learning

- Simple growing activities in the lead up to the event will have a big impact on your pupils' engagement and increase the likelihood of trying new foods.
- Hosting a Get Together following a harvest of the fruit and veg you've grown is the perfect opportunity to share your pupils' fresh crops with parents, grandparents and the wider community.
- Linking this to your regular teaching topics will strengthen your pupils' association with growing and harvesting their own food.

3.3 – We organize an annual farm visit, and this is linked to wider learning

Farmers are part of local communities too!

Visiting a farm providing ingredients for the Get Together will get your students excited and can also be linked to the benefits of local food in an assembly Bronze 3.0.

Top Tip: Why not invite the farmer along to your Get Together? This will build that ongoing relationship needed to gain your silver award.

Our team of experts are always a phone call, tweet or email away to make your ambitious plans a reality!

ffl@foodforlife.org.uk
www.foodforlife.org.uk/get-togethers

Food Community and Partnerships

4.0 – We hold an annual event on a food theme for our pupils, parents and wider community

So long as different age groups are involved in either cooking or growing food together at your food event, you'll have this criteria covered.

4.1 – We make efforts to actively engage parents and/or the wider community in our growing and cooking activities

- Send home 'Get home-growing kits' before the event and offer a reward for anyone who brings something in that they grew or foraged.
- Have parent-child Head-Sous chef partnerships to prepare salads, dish up and more on the day.
- **Grandparent Gardening Week** is a great opportunity to kick start a series of Get Togethers that could lead to a big harvest celebration.

Top Tip: pea shoots and radishes are low effort, high yield!

4.2 – We share Food for Life learning with local schools, the wider community and other partners

Linking with local schools when organizing the event through sharing ideas or resources means you're already building the community around your Whole Setting Approach (WSA) to food.

- Create posters, share pictures, give a talk or provide a tour of the school to show all the work you've been doing.
- Let them know what you are planning, and you might recruit a few volunteers as well!
- Writing a blog about the journey or using social media is another great way to shout about what you've been getting up to.

Top Tip: If you can encourage your children to share what they've learnt themselves, you're achieving this criteria at Silver standard! (see Silver 4.2).



Silver

Whether you're a Bronze superstar school already or ambitious from the outset, a well-planned Food for Life Get Together will nourish your Silver preparations right at the start of the year.

3.1 – We ensure pupils in our garden group and/or a class are growing fruit, vegetables and herbs organically

Did your pupils feel inspired after your Organic September assembly?

- How about working with them to prepare an organic growing area? Get to work quick and your Get Together can have a supply of fresh radishes, spinach and even pak choi!
- Outside of Organic September you could link with a local allotment group, organic grower, market gardener or farmer to provide top tips to students, as well as developing an awareness of the different types of work this can lead to.

3.2 – We have produce from our school growing area at least once a term for pupils to use in cooking activities

- Harvesting those herbs, veg or fruit for the Get Together provides a perfect opportunity for the students to demonstrate a farm to fork understanding early on.
- Using our Next Steps Guide, you can involve students in planning your growing season and menu for future events, helping you work towards Gold 3.2 as well.

3.4 One or more of our year groups keep in touch with a local farm throughout the year

Inviting the local farmer to your Get Together will build an ongoing relationship and a chance to discuss ways to keep in touch throughout the year.

3.5 – We organize at least one annual visit to or from small local food businesses

Not all produce needs to be cooked at school. Why not get a local food business to help or bring along some of their produce to showcase to parents and the wider community? It's a win-win!

4.0 – We hold events to involve parents and/or the wider community in growing and cooking activities

- Get Togethers preparation can be the first event in the calendar that builds towards completing this requirement.
- The combination of handing out seeds and providing a 'plant care crash course' for parents would be a great example of extending learning beyond the school gates and feed in to Gold 4.2.

4.1 – We actively encourage our pupils and their parents to grow and cook their own produce at home

Providing recipes or seeds for produce you want to use at the event is the perfect way to carry on the excitement and learning outside of school. This is something that parents often say they'd love more help and guidance with.

4.2 – Our pupils share Food for Life learning with local schools, the wider community and other partners

To meet this requirement, you could:

- Display students' work in lessons related to the event for your community to enjoy.
- Provide props on the dinner tables such as potted plants and table talkers to provoke discussions and opportunities for your students to show off how much they know.
- Support pupils to give tours of the school or host assemblies before the meal.