



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

School Meals Coalition

COMMITMENT DOCUMENT FOR IRELAND



Introduction

Ireland expresses its strong support for school meals programmes at a policy level. Addressing child poverty is a government priority and the School Meals Programme administered through the Department of Social Protection is a key part of this policy in Ireland. This is also an aim of the European Union Child Guarantee to which Ireland is a signatory.

The objective of the School Meals Programme in Ireland is to address the risk of food poverty among children from poor and vulnerable backgrounds in an inclusive and non-stigmatising manner by providing regular, nutritious food to all children to support them in taking full advantage of the education provided to them. The programme is an important component of policies to encourage school attendance and extra educational achievement.

Ireland as a proud member of the School Meals Coalition announces the following commitments towards its goals:

At a national level:

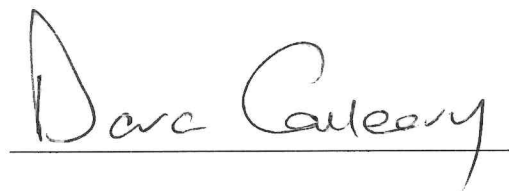
Policy commitments

Under the Programme for Government 2025 which covers the full term of the current government, which is expected to last for five years there is specific commitment to the continued development of the Hot School Meals as follows:

- Complete the roll-out of Hot School Meals to all Primary Schools in 2025.
- Ensure that suppliers adhere to robust guidelines on the nutritional value of meals, the dietary requirements of students, reduce food waste and utilise recyclable packaging.
- Commence the rollout of Hot School Meals to all secondary schools over the lifetime of the next government.
- Implement the Summer 2025 Holiday Meals pilot project and evaluate this initiative aimed at closing the nutritional gap during school closures.

At an international level:

- Ireland will advocate for the inclusion of school meals in global agendas at relevant international events, emphasising the importance of the Coalition's goals.
- Ireland will participate in and encourage the sharing of best practices and peer-to-peer learning among Coalition members to enhance the quality of school meal programmes.
- Participate in research carried out by the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dara Calleary". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Dara Calleary T.D.

Minister for Social Protection

A handwritten flourish or underline in black ink, starting from the end of the text "Minister for Social Protection" and extending to the right.