

What's for lunch?

Learning from vegetarian & plant based choices

Mac & Cheese

Cheese Whirl

Veggie sausage
and mash

Veggie Curry

Pizza



BBC R4 Inside Science
Vegetarian School Dinners

School interview at 10.30
Click on visual to listen

Rachel Tomlinson, Head at Barrowford Primary, in Lancashire joined several Tide~ Conversations in November. Recently her school featured in a BBC Radio 4 'Inside Science' programme about vegetarian school dinners -- so we asked her about it.

In the programme the children are enthusiastic and enjoyed the choices. **We recommend listening to the programme.**

Rachel said "We serve incredibly delicious food with 3 or 4 vegetarian or plant based choices each day, we also offer chicken and, on Friday, a fish choice". The chicken was added 3 days a week when it was realised that regulations, that date back 60 years or more, stipulate that.

There is scope for improving the regulations but it would be a pity if that also reduced the local engagement and learning opportunity.

" This goes hand in hand with learning about sustainability."

" It is about offering experiences, not forcing a vegetarian diet."

Rachel points out she is not a vegetarian herself. She has reduced the amount of meat she eats because of an awareness of the impact of farming on climate change, particularly the methane burps, slurry and use of fertilisers linked to intensive livestock farming.

School budgets cannot buy quality meat so overall the quality of what is on offer has improved too. Asked about waste, Rachel observed that there is not that much. Children choose what they want first thing in the morning, so quantities are determined on that basis.

There was some negative media interest but parents are supportive. Once a week a class invites parents to join them for lunch. **This has many positive outcomes, not least an awareness of the menu and quality of the food, and an insight into how it connects to the curriculum.**

Rachel has made a contribution to the next ET magazine. It focuses on the school's approaches to learning.

