



An Bille um Chaighdeáin Chothaitheacha le haghaidh Béilí Scoile, 2026
School Meals Nutritional Standards Bill 2026

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



**AN BILLE UM CHAIGHDEÁIN CHOTHAITHEACHA LE hAGHAIDH BÉILÍ
SCOILE, 2026
SCHOOL MEALS NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS BILL 2026**

*Mar a tionscnaíodh
As initiated*

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ACTS REFERRED TO

Education Act 1998 (No. 51)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 (No. 29)

Local Government Act 2001 (No. 37)

Local Government Reform Act 2014 (No. 1)



AN BILLE UM CHAIGHDEÁIN CHOTHAITHEACHA LE hAGHAIDH BÉILÍ
SCOILE, 2026
SCHOOL MEALS NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS BILL 2026

Bill

entitled

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An Act to provide for the making of regulations by the Minister for Health providing for nutritional standards and related requirements for school meals provided under school meal schemes funded by moneys provided directly or indirectly by the State or local authorities; to provide for the enforcement of such regulations by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland; and to provide for related matters.

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Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

Definitions

1. In this Act—

“local authority” has the same meaning as it has in the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014);

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“Minister” means the Minister for Health;

“school meals” means any administrative scheme or programme whereby State or local authority funding is provided, either directly or indirectly, to schools for the provision of meals to children.

Regulations providing for nutritional standards for school meals

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2. (1) The Minister shall, within the period of 12 months from the coming into operation of this Act, by regulations provide for nutritional standards and related requirements for school meals.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (1)*, regulations under that subsection may make provision for the following:

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(a) age-appropriate portion sizes;

(b) food groups to be contained in each meal;

(c) quantities, portions or servings of each food group to be contained in each meal;

(d) food preparation and cooking method requirements;

(e) frequency of provision of certain food types in meals offered;

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- (f) prohibition of certain foods;
 - (g) types of drinks to be served with meals;
 - (h) provision of vegetarian alternative meals.
- (3) Before the Minister makes regulations under *subsection (1)*, he or she shall consult with— 5
- (a) the Minister for Social Protection,
 - (b) the Minister for Children, Disability and Equality,
 - (c) the Minister for Education and Youth, and
 - (d) the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.
- (4) In making regulations under *subsection (1)*, the Minister shall have regard to— 10
- (a) national food-based dietary guidance,
 - (b) the constitutional rights of children,
 - (c) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and
 - (d) promoting a healthy food environment, including the underlying determinants of health such as safe food, nutritious food and adequate nutrition. 15
- (5) Regulations made under this section shall be deemed to be food legislation for the purposes of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 and shall be enforceable—
- (a) by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland,
 - (b) by an official agency within the meaning of that Act acting pursuant to a service contract with the Authority, or 20
 - (c) by both the Authority and such an agency,
- and the enforcement provisions provided for by that Act in respect of food legislation shall apply for the purposes of ensuring compliance with the requirements of any regulations so made.

Amendment of section 9 of Education Act 1998 25

3. Section 9 of the Education Act 1998 is amended by inserting the following paragraph after paragraph (d)

“(da) promote a healthy life and healthy food environment for students.”.

Short title and commencement

4. (1) This Act may be cited as the School Meals Nutritional Standards Act 2026. 30
- (2) This Act shall come into operation on such day or days as the Minister may by order or orders appoint either generally or with reference to any particular purpose or provision and different days may be so appointed for different purposes or different provisions.

An Bille um Chaighdeáin Chothaitheacha le
haghaidh Béilí Scoile, 2026

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht do dhéanamh socrú go ndéanfaidh an tAire Sláinte rialacháin lena ndéanfar foráil maidir le caighdeáin chothaitheacha agus le ceanglais ghaolmhara le haghaidh béilí scoile arna soláthar faoi scéimeanna na mbéilí scoile arna maoiniú as airgead arna sholáthar, go díreach nó go neamhdhíreach, ag an Stát nó ag údaráis áitiúla; do dhéanamh socrú maidir le hÚdarás Sábháilteachta Bia na hÉireann d'fhorfheidhmiú rialacháin den sórt sin; agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

An Teachta Sinéad Ní Chuimín a thug isteach,
16 Meitheamh, 2026

School Meals Nutritional Standards Bill
2026

BILL

(as initiated)

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Introduced by Deputy Jen Cummins,
16th June, 2026

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ARNA FHOILSIÚ AG OIFIG AN tSOLÁTHAIR
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