



## **Healthy School Meals and Educational Outcomes**

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This paper provides field evidence on the effects of diet on educational outcomes, exploiting a campaign lead in the UK in 2004, which introduced drastic changes in the meals, offered in the schools of one Borough – Greenwich - shifting from low-budget processed meals towards healthier options. We evaluate the effect of the campaign on educational outcomes in primary schools using a difference in differences approach; comparing educational outcomes in primary schools (key stage 2 outcomes more specifically) before and after the reform, using the neighbouring Local Education Authorities as a control group. We find evidence that educational outcomes did improve significantly in English and Science. We also find that the campaign lead to a 15% fall in authorised absences – which are most likely linked to illness and health.

**Keywords:** Child nutrition; Child health; School meals; Education; Natural Experiment, Placebo effect

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