



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

28th October 2020

MARCUS RASHFORD PETITION HITS 1 MILLION SIGNATURES

#ENDCHILDFOODPOVERTY CAMPAIGN

- **Marcus Rashford Petition calling on Government to commit funding to the 3 recommendations in the National Food Strategy hits 1 million signatures**
- **Petition Committee confirm it is one of only 5 petitions to ever reach a million signatures and is the first petition to do this since the last general election.**
- **Henry Dimbleby releases new evidence to back the 3 recommendations in the National Food Strategy [here](#).**
- **www.kidsmealsmap.co.uk Over 1000 businesses, local authorities and charities register on Kids Meal Map as providing free food for children over October half term**
- **Right2Food Young Ambassadors celebrate as general public back Marcus Rashford campaign and send a clear message to Government**

A Parliamentary Petition launched by Marcus Rashford has reached 1 million signatures showing the huge public support for the campaign. [Petition link](#)

The Parliamentary Petitions office confirmed that it is only the fifth petition to have reached 1 million signatures on the website and it is the first time since the general election that the Government have been presented with a petition reaching 1 million.

This follows a week of intense response from the General Public in support of Marcus Rashford's #endchildfoodpoverty campaign.

Also this week over 1000 have registered on the www.kidsmealsmap.co.uk designed to support families and show the businesses, local authorities and community organisations who are providing free meals to vulnerable children over the October half term. The map, built by communications agency [PLMR](#) is a new national resource and food organisations are being asked to visit the website and register details of what they are offering in order that vulnerable children and families can find out what is happening in their local area. The site has been visited over 40,000 times since it launched on Saturday. The Food Foundation are also hoping that MP's use it as an opportunity to visit projects in their local area who are on the front line in food provision to the most vulnerable families.

Data from the Food Foundation revealed that 1.4 million children (18% of 8-17 year olds) reported experiences of food insecurity over the summer holidays. Experiences of food insecurity included:

- a. Having to eat less and make food last longer because of lack of money to buy more (6%)
- b. Parents not eating because there wasn't enough food at home (5%)
- c. Children being hungry but not eating to avoid using up food at home (4%)
- d. Children being hungry but not eating because of lack of food at home (4%)
- e. Not eating a proper meal due to lack of money for food (4%)
- f. Eating at a friend's house because there wasn't enough food at home (3%).

The Food Foundation is part of footballer Marcus Rashford's *Child Food Poverty Task Force*, and along with 20 charities and key names in the food industry is calling on Government to allocate sufficient budget to the three National Food Strategy recommendations, as part of an urgent recovery package for vulnerable families and their children this Autumn.

These are:

- Eligibility for Free School Meal (FSM) to be expanded to include every child (up to the age of 16) from a household where the parent or guardian is in receipt of Universal Credit (or equivalent benefits)
- Extend the Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) to all areas in England, so that summer holiday support is available to all children in receipt of Free School Meals.
- Increase the value of Healthy Start vouchers to £4.25 per week and expand the scheme to every pregnant woman and to all households with children under 4 where a parent or guardian is in receipt of Universal Credit or equivalent benefits.

This week the National Food Strategy have also published new evidence supporting the 3 recommendations which can be viewed [here](#).

The Right2Food Young Ambassadors who have been campaigning having launched their [Children's Right2Food Charter](#)

You Tube links to Food Ambassador Video's:

[#EndChildFoodPoverty petition hits 1m - Thank you from Debbie](#)

[#EndChildFoodPoverty petition hits 1m - Thank you from Beth](#)

[#EndChildFoodPoverty petition hits 1m - Thank you from Rabiya](#)

[#EndChildFoodPoverty petition hits 1m - Thank you from Jani](#)

Notes to Editor

Anna Taylor, Executive Director Food Foundation said: 'The petition shows just how many citizens want a lasting solution to child hunger. The Government must act without delay and implement the 3 recommendations in the National Food Strategy'.

Dev Sharma, 15 from Leicester, Right2Food Young Food Ambassador said: 'We have been campaigning for over 3 years now to get the Government to address this crisis that so many young people are facing across the UK. Today we have Marcus Rashford and 1 million people standing together demanding change. Young people deserve access to a healthy and affordable diet all year around regardless of where they live or what background they come from'.

Jani Clarke, 18 from Huddersfield, Right2Food Young Food Ambassador said: 'I cant believe we reached 1 million signatures. It just shows how much people care about this and how much people are suffering as well. Change is coming and this is not the end'.

ENDS

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Social Media

Twitter: @Food_Foundation

#EndChildFoodPoverty

#Right2Food

About the Food Foundation

The [Food Foundation](#) is a charity working to influence food policy and business practice, shaping a sustainable food system which makes healthy diets affordable and accessible for all. We work in partnership with researchers, campaigners, community bodies, industry, investors, government and citizens to galvanise the UK's diverse agents of change, using surprising and inventive ideas to drive fundamental shifts in our food system. These efforts are based on the continual re-evaluation of opportunities for action, building and synthesising strong evidence, convening powerful coalitions, harnessing citizens' voices and delivering impactful communications.

The Food Foundation's [COVID-19 tracker](#) is live, providing analysis of key developments and insights from the front line on how coronavirus is impacting the food system, and how those changes are affecting citizens.

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